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ABSTRACT

This document describes a study that used the "critical incident technique" to define and produce a descriptive classification of safe and unsafe driving behavior exhibited by adults and to organize these descriptions for use in older driver improvement courses and other educational activities. An introduction describes the study's purpose and the critical incident technique. A section on methodology describes the study sample, data collection methods, the analysis of critical incidents, and interjudge reliability. The section on results describes the study's limitations, presents the driving behaviors identified by the study in tabular form as representing a taxonomy made up of three major categories (driving practices, physical conditions, and attitude) and 35 subcategories, and provides a detailed discussion of each of these categories. Forty-four references and four appendices are included. Appendices A-C contain the data collection forms on which critical incidents were collected, instructions for the forms, instructions for a test of interjudge reliability, and the list of prime categories the subcategories. Appendix D, which constitutes over half the document, contains descriptions of safe and unsafe driving practices selected from the more than 1,000 collected during the study. Most appear in the words in which they were received from the participants who described the critical incidents and all are organized by category and subcategory. (CML)

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SAFE AND UNSAFE PERFORMANCE OF OLDER DRIVERS: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

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FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The performance of elderly drivers involves the complex interactions of many variables and does not lend itself to simple analysis. Traditionally, it has been described in terms of needed "corrective action." When traffic records are analyzed, the focus is on the "at fault" behavior.

That scenario is incomplete. There are few if any descriptive records of "safe" driving behavior. In order to provide a full spectrum and to balance the picture, the authors sought a method to obtain examples of "safe" driving behavior, the positive side of driving. The purpose of this study was to collect and analyze descriptions of "safe" as well as "unsafe" actions of older drivers in order to provide a sharper definition and a more useful application of these terms.

The Critical Incident Technique (CIT) was chosen by the authors as the most effective method for reaching sound, applicable conclusions such as: 1) a descriptive classification of older driver behavior for use by all persons who should understand it as fully as they can before attempting to intervene; and 2) content and case studies for older driver improvement programs.

The CIT depends on descriptions of the behavior under scrutiny. In this case, descriptions of safe and unsafe older driver behavior were sought from six lay and professional groups--older drivers themselves, state licensing examiners, instructors of older driver improvement courses, enforcement personnel, traffic safety and gerontological experts, and national carrier (truck) drivers. Each of the 1838 descriptions, collected from individuals in these groups, while unique in language and substance, contributed to what the authors believe is a balanced and reliable picture of the performance of drivers aged 55 and over. The cooperation of the following organizations and persons was essential in this undertaking, and to them the authors are grateful, more than they can say.

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INTRODUCTION

The elderly population will increase substantially in the years ahead (American Association of Retired Persons, 1986; Highway Users Federation and Automotive Safety Foundation, 1985; Koltnow, 1985; U.S. Department of Transportation, 1986, pp. 1-14; U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, 1986).

So long as they are able, older Americans will continue to drive their automobiles to satisfy their transportation needs (U.S. Department of Transportation, 1986, pp. 1-14; Wachs, 1979; Yee, 1985). Consequently, it is expected that the proportion of older drivers, those over age 55, will increase from approximately 22 percent of all drivers today (Accidents Facts, 1986; Barakat & Mulinazzi, 1987; U.S. Department of Transportation, 1985, p. 12) to 28 percent by the year 2000 and 39 percent by 2050 (Highway Safety Facts, 1979).

Mobility--being able to get around--is a highly important factor in the independence and mental health of older adults (Butler & Lewis, 1982; Carp, 1971; VanCoevering, 1973; Wachs, 1985). Almost everyone concerned with traffic safety wants to keep older drivers on the highways as long as they can drive safely. We must not mistake age as the sole indicator of driving ability (Malfetti, 1985). But defining "safe" and "unsafe" performance can be complicated. Therefore, the prime purpose of this study was to determine what experts in relevant fields and older drivers themselves consider indicative of "safe" and "unsafe" driving.

Accident/Violation Records as Indicators of Unsafe Driving

Accident and violation records have long been used to differentiate "good" and "bad" drivers of all ages, and equally long have been regarded as unreliable for such use (Barmack, 1962; Fine, Malfetti, & Shoben, 1965; McGuire, 1973). A comprehensive study (All-Industry Research Advisory Council, 1984) of public motor vehicle accident records from 37 states revealed that: (1) only 47% of the 27,402 accidents known to insurers were listed on the publicly available records of these states; (2) only twelve states had records of two-thirds or more of the accidents involving vehicle damage of $500 or more; (3) nine states recorded fewer than one-third of the "over $500" accidents; (4) accident reporting requirements vary widely by state; (5) the presence or absence of state or local police on the scene determines the amount and type of accident information found in state motor vehicle records--some kinds of accidents are more likely to be recorded than others; (6) convictions for violations related to accidents vary with rates at which police arrive at the scene, and this in turn varies considerably by state--on the average, there was one conviction recorded for every five accidents, and the range was from 4 convictions per 100 accidents in some states to 41 per 100 in others.

Furthermore, records of violations are kept at the state level only when a conviction occurs; unconvicted violations usually are kept by local jurisdictions--i.e., town or city. For these and other reasons, what happens and what is recorded and recoverable can be two entirely different things.

Nevertheless, almost all descriptions and discussions of unsafe older driver behavior and problem areas have relied mainly on such records (Transportation Research Board, 1986; Yanik, 1985). In addition, it has been said that when the elderly are involved in accidents, they are more likely than others to be judged at fault, even if they are not (Barakat & Mulinazzi, 1987). Furthermore, these records give only "one side of the coin"--the unsafe behaviors that end in accidents and/or convictions. Yet it is well known that trying to teach what not to do is of limited value, unless one can also say what to do. Therefore, the other side of the coin, a clear recognition of safe older driver performance, becomes a requirement for effective intervention.

After considering various techniques for arriving at a reliable determination of safe and unsafe driving by older adults, the authors chose the Critical Incident Technique (CIT). The CIT requires descriptions of incidents in which observers felt that the actions of the older motorist illustrated safe or unsafe driver behavior. Ultimately, on the basis of an analysis of these incidents, the investigators hoped to achieve the purposes of the study:

1. to define and produce a descriptive classification (taxonomy) of safe and unsafe older driver behavior; and

2. to organize these descriptions for use in older driver improvement courses and other educational activities.

The Critical Incident Technique (CIT)

The CIT contains very little that is new. For ages, man has used his powers of observation as a basis for decision and action. What has been conspicuously needed is a set of procedures for analyzing and synthesizing such observations. The CIT incorporates these procedures.

It is defined by its originator, John C. Flanagan (1954), as a method of "...identifying critical job requirements...those behaviors which are crucial in making the difference between doing a job effectively and doing it ineffectively." He first used the CIT to develop procedures for selection and classification of United States Air Force crews in World War II. Since then, the technique has been employed entensively for describing and analyzing human actions. It produced criteria for ethical standards of psychologists (Hobbs, 1948). One of the present authors had already used it for studies of driver behavior and teacher performance (Anderson & Malfetti, 1963; Fine, Malfetti, & Shoben, 1965).

The range of uses of the CIT includes:

--developing a health education course based on the needs of students (Malfetti, 1955);

--compiling instructional material for a nursing manual (Flanagan, Marhese, Tuska, & Fivars, 1960, cited in Zemke & Kramlinger, 1985, p. 133);

--developing criteria on the performance of combat aviators (Boyles, Prunkl, & Wahlber, 1969);

--identifying critical elements for description of leadership (Van Fleet, 1974);

--composing questions for a situational job interview (Latham, Saari, Pursell, & Campion, 1980).

To work well, the CIT must have a reservoir of "effective" and "ineffective" or "good" and "bad" or "safe" and "unsafe" behaviors from which to draw for preparing descriptions. There was ample evidence of the existence of such a reservoir for older drivers:

1. Motor vehicle injuries are the leading cause of accidental death of people aged 65 to 74, and half of those over 75 (Koltnow, 1985, p. 21). Obviously some older drivers are performing dangerously.

2. The skills necessary for safe driving begin to deteriorate at age 55 or thereabouts (Maleck & Hummer, 1986; Planek & Overend, 1973), perhaps dramatically so after 75 (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, 1986). Yet age should not be mistaken as the sole indicator of driving ability. Drivers of 55 and over demonstrably represent a wide range of ability and practices. Some recognize declining skills and cope with them by planning their driving for safer times and circumstances. Others, unaware of or denying impaired ability, represent special dangers for themselves and other drivers. Therefore, there should be a sizable number of observable illustrations of "safe" and "unsafe" behavior.

METHODOLOGY

The five basic steps comprising the CIT as described by Flanagan (1954) are:

1. to determine and report the aim of the activity to be studied;

2. to develop specific plans for observing and collecting incidents critical to the activity;

3. to collect the data by individual interview and/or questionnaire;

4. to analyze the data by abstracting the relevant behavioral aspects (critical behaviors)[1] from the critical incidents and organize them into an empirically developed category system (critical requirements); and

5. to interpret and report the data by stating the requirements of the activity, giving due regard to the limitations of the study.

Flanagan (1954) defines an incident as "any observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself to permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act" (p. 327). He further states, "To be critical, an incident must occur in a situation where the purpose or intent of the act seems fairly clear to the observer and where its consequences are sufficiently definite to leave little doubt concerning its effects" (p. 327). Flanagan also specifies, "The observer must be qualified to make judgments regarding the activity observed" (p. 422).

In addition to the requirements described above, the effective use of the CIT rests on two assumptions. The first is that the individuals supplying critical incidents can make relevant and consistent judgments of critically effective and ineffective behavior based on their experientially derived ability to know the crucial elements of the activity being studied. The second is that these same individuals can report such occurrences accurately.

Yet Flanagan (1954) asserts, "The CIT does not consist of a single rigid set of rules of governing such data collection. Rather it should be thought of as a flexible set of principles which must be modified and adapted to meet the specific situation at hand" (p. 335). With this statement in mind, the investigators, while preserving as many of the basic steps of the CIT as possible, modified them to suit the requirements of this study.

Some general decisions were made at the outset. Since driving is a complex task, vulnerable to so many variables, it was assumed that defining safe and unsafe older driver behavior would necessitate analyzing a large number of critical incidents. Written descriptions by mail were therefore chosen as preferable to personal interview. The mailed data collection forms solicited incidents which were critical in the descriptive but not causal sense of "safe" and "unsafe" older driver

---

[1]"Behaviors" is used here as a method of expressing more than one act in an incident. Each incident contains one or more distinct behavioral units. The units abstracted were those that were considered particularly effective or ineffective in terms of the action described in the incident and are, therefore, termed "critical behaviors."

behavior. It was also assumed that professionals from fields relating to older drivers, as well as older drivers themselves, could make sound judgments regarding the safety of older driver performance.

Sample

To insure a wide range of perspectives, and to limit possible bias due to area of specialization, the investigators solicited a fairly wide range of lay persons and professionals. Where possible, they also sought good geographic representation in the interest of guarding against localized loadings of critical behavior descriptions. Thus samples were secured from six groups as follows:

1. American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) 55 Alive/Mature Driving Course participants. Although the majority of this group was from Arizona, less than three percent had obtained their first driver's license from that state. When asked where they did receive their first license, or in how many and what states they had been licensed at some point, the responses sounded like a roll call of the 50 states. They were chosen to represent older drivers themselves, and they made their observations from that perspective.

2. State Licensing Examiners. This group was composed of persons associated with driver licensing. They represented at least 16 states and three Canadian provinces (some were not identified in this respect). They joined our study in response to a request for cooperation from the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators.

3. Instructors of AARP Courses. These are volunteer teachers of improvement courses focused on the safe and unsafe practices of older drivers. They came from throughout the United States and were obtained through the cooperation of AARP Headquarters in Washington, D.C., and 55 Alive/Mature Driving Field Coordinators and State and Assistant State Coordinators nationwide.

4. International Association of Chiefs of Police. The Association invited the cooperation of selected regional members and enforcement personnel (those out on the road enforcing the laws). Respondents from at least 14 states contributed descriptions.

5. Traffic Safety Experts. This group included an optometrist, orthopedic surgeon, insurance specialist, licensing examiner, traffic engineer, highway engineer, gerontologist, educator, traffic safety specialist, and automobile design engineer. They were seasoned professionals who had published and/or participated in national conferences on the needs and problems of older drivers.

6. A national commercial carrier. Drivers from this organization drove all sizes of trucks and rigs throughout urban, suburban, and rural areas. The organization is known for attention to safety and the rigorous training and supervision of its drivers. Descriptions were received from drivers in all geographic regions of the United States.

The numbers of incidents and critical behaviors obtained from each of these groups, and the overall totals, are shown in Table 1 (p. 9).

Data Collection

The investigators developed a data collection package (Appendix A). It began with a discussion of the reason for the study and the value of contributing to it. There followed an instruction sheet, written examples of critical incidents describing safe and unsafe older driver behavior, and two blank sheets, one for the "safe" and the other for the "unsafe" descriptions to be provided by participants. Appendix A contains the first page of the data collection packet given to Groups 1 and 5 (the AARP course participants, and the traffic safety experts). Appendix B contains the first pages as adapted for the other four groups. The remaining pages in the packets were similar to those given to Groups 1 and 5.

The investigators themselves administered the packets to Groups 1 and 5. The packets were mailed by their cooperating organizations to the participants of the remaining groups, and were accompanied by a letter endorsing the study. The critical descriptions obtained from the various groups were collected in several ways, most usually through return to an administrator of the cooperating organization, and then on to the investigators.

Analysis of Critical Incidents

The collected descriptions of "safe" and "unsafe" incidents were examined by the investigators. Those not conforming to the definition of "incident" as used in the Critical Incident Technique were assigned separately by each of the investigators to an "anecdotal" category. "Incidents" in which the reporter was judged to be neither a participant nor a direct observer constituted the majority of "anecdotals." The most common among these was the reporter's saying what he or she thought safe driving was, rather than describing observed behaviors of it. There was 100 percent agreement between investigators on assignments to the anecdotal category.

The criteria established for abstracting the usable critical behaviors were then agreed upon:

1. The focus should be on the driving behavior of the older driver.

2. Any single incident may involve more than one critical behavior.

3. Whenever possible, the original words of the person reporting the incident should be used to describe the abstracted critical behavior.

4. When the original wording cannot be used, the abstracter should develop an appropriate phrase to describe a selected critical behavior.

Using these criteria and after agreeing on how to identify and mark the abstracted behaviors on the sheets on which they had been collected, the investigators then independently abstracted critical behaviors from the same 100 incidents randomly selected from a larger pool--500 incidents, half representing "safe" and half "unsafe" older driver behavior. They then discusseed the means by which they identified and marked their respective abstractions. Their purpose was to achieve the maximum congruence, and to develop instructions for two additional judges to test the interjudge reliability of the abstraction process.

Interjudge Reliability: Abstractions

To measure interjudge reliability in abstracting the critical behaviors of "safe" and "unsafe" behavior, 80 incidents, 40 safe and 40 unsafe, were randomly selected from 500. The investigators abstracted the 80; so did two judges who were given the following instructions:

> In this study we are attempting to ascertain the reliability of abstracting critical behavior from incidents of safe and unsafe older driver behavior by comparing the analyses independently made by several judges. Will you, as one of the judges, please read all of the following instructions before starting. Remember that the focus of this study is on the behavior of the driver.
>
> 1. Choose the behavior of the driver which, in your opinion, represents the critical or most important act found in each incident.
>
> 2. Underline the phrase in each incident which represents the critical driver behavior that you have chosen. If the incident does not contain an appropriate phrase, then develop the simplest one you can and append it, underlined, to the end of the incident.
>
> 3. Please note that any single incident may involve more than one critical behavior. If you feel that there are two or more independent and distinct actions that require notice, then underscore each of them in the usual way, but be sure to put brackets around the separate statements and number them in the margin. If you need to develop descriptive phrases, please number them to insure their distinctiveness.

4. If in an incident of "safe" driver behavior, you isolate an "unsafe" critical behavior, or the reverse, please label it as such by placing the appropriate word, "safe" or "unsafe," in the margin adjacent to their underlined behavior or after the appended phrase.

Employing a simple scale, based on a model used by Jacques (1959), Anderson and Malfetti (1963), and Fine, Malfetti, and Shoben (1965), interjudge agreement was computed and yielded a mean average of approximately 90 percent. Believing this level satisfactorily high, the investigators then abstracted the remainder of incidents on their own, with gross results indicated in Table 1. The next step was to classify and synthesize the abstracted critical behaviors in order to summarize the data efficiently and make it meaningful to the purposes of the study.

Interjudge Reliability: Categories and Subcategories

After approximately 500 critical behaviors were abstracted from the descriptions of critical incidents, the investigators inductively developed categories and subcategories to which the critical behaviors were assigned. Initially there were three categories--Driving Habits (DH), Physical Condition (PC), and Attitude (A). There were also 24 subcategories: 15 under DH, five under PC, and four under A.

The investigators were aware that (PC) and (A) could sound more like causal influences than critical behaviors. However, from some descriptions it became clear that many critical behaviors could be traced to the same physical condition. For example, there were numerous illustrations of poor vision resulting in such behaviors as lane straddling, very slow driving, going through stop signs, and going off the edge of the highway. In such cases, the investigators assigned the description to the subcategory Vision, Hearing and Other Senses, under the category Physical Condition, rather than inflate the various subcategories under Driving Practices. The same approach was taken when numerous critical behaviors in a description seemed to stem from one strength or deficiency under Attitude. It was therefore possible to create a profile of what older drivers do safely or unsafely, and why they may be doing it.

The two investigators then independently assigned the same 100 abstracted behaviors selected from the original 500 to these categories. On a simple agree-disagree scale for category placement, they were 91 percent in agreement. After discussing the reasons for the nine percent disagreement, they modified categories accordingly until they agreed virtually 100 percent.

The investigators then gave 80 of the same 100 critical behaviors to two academic professionals, both trained in the use of the CIT, with instructions (Appendix C) for assigning the behaviors to the three

Table 1

Sample Groups by Frequency of Usable and Anecdotal Critical Incidents (CI) and Safe and Unsafe Critical Behaviors by Major Categories

Sample Groups	CI Descriptions			CI Behaviors			Major Categories: Driving Habits			Physical Condition			Attitude		
	Used	Anecdotal	Total	Safe	Unsafe	Total	Safe	Unsafe	Total	Safe	Unsafe	Total	Safe	Unsafe	Total
AARP Drivers	320	100	420	254	337	591	119	243	362	25	52	77	110	42	152
State Examiners	191	50	241	245	379	624	182	282	464	9	63	72	54	34	88
AARP Instructors	136	5	141	138	177	315	107	132	239	8	31	39	23	14	37
Chiefs of Police	34	1	35	30	44	74	18	27	45	2	13	15	10	4	14
Experts	10	0	10	12	23	35	6	14	20	1	8	9	5	1	6
Carrier Drivers	73	1	74	93	106	199	55	86	141	4	13	17	34	7	41
Totals	764	157	921	772	1066	1838	487	784	1271	49	180	229	236	102	338

categories and 24 subcategories. Each judge's assignments were then compared with those of the investigators. This procedure produced 100% agreement in terms of categories and 82% for subcategories. When the judges' comments about the subcategories were discussed with them and changes made accordingly, the subcategory agreement between investigators and each judge rose to an average of 92%.

In view of these high levels of agreement, the investigators then placed all abstracted critical behaviors into categories and subcategories. By the time the final list of all categories emerged, it reflected the critical behaviors that were abstracted after interjudge reliability was determined, and adaptations stemming from the need for making the abstracted behaviors as specific as possible for descriptive and educational purposes. The final yield, as presented in the following pages, was three major categories and 35 subcategories.

RESULTS

Limitations

There are some things the reader should be told before interpreting the results. As Corbally (1956) cautions, there is a "danger that either the researcher or the reader will confuse the frequency of mention of a critical element and a 'degree of criticalness'...the use of the CIT does not in any way indicate that one critical element is more critical than other" (p. 60). One limitation, then, is that the technique does not discriminate between behaviors with regard to their relative "criticalness." It simply isolates those behaviors which, in the contributor's opinion, are critical--whether the behavior appears in one or in hundreds of descriptions. In addition, the CIT seeks only to describe critical dimensions of behavior; it does not pretend to discover causal relationships.

Another limitation is that the validity of the data depends on the congruence of the descriptions provided by members of the groups contributing to this study. Although the investigators made every effort to obtain the most relevant, competent, and representative groups available--and believe they succeeded--there is no way to be sure. Over 90% of the members of Groups 1 and 5 provided descriptions, but there was no way to determine what percentage of the other groups responded. Thus, with a greater response from all groups, or from different groups entirely, the resulting critical behaviors and categories might have been somewhat different.

Presentation of Results

Critical behaviors are presented quantitatively in categories and subcategories to represent a taxonomy of safe and unsafe older driver

behavior. The taxonomy, comprising three major categories and 35 subcategories, is given in Table 2 by frequency and percentage for all sample groups combined. Table 3 presents this same taxonomy by frequency and percentage for the six sample groups respectively. These tables are followed by discussion of the combined results as well as some of the similarities and dissimilarities of descriptions by members of the six sample groups. Ranking (Table 4) of the subcategories by the respective groups is used to reinforce this discussion as is some of the language of the critical behaviors from which the subcategories were derived. Some critical behaviors were received by the investigators long after the tables had been compiled. These behaviors were referred to, where appropriate, in some of the narrative descriptions.

Appendix D presents examples of safe and unsafe behaviors in language as close as possible to that of the descriptions submitted by study participants. This Appendix should prove useful for older driver improvement courses and other educational experiences in which "case studies" of behavior and how to change it for the better are an integral part.

Discussion of Results

As revealed earlier (Table 1), 1838 descriptions of safe and unsafe critical older driver behaviors were collected from older drivers themselves, driver licensing examiners, instructors of improvement courses for older drivers, enforcement personnel, traffic safety experts, and truck drivers. The critical behaviors then were abstracted and categorized, following the scientific protocol described by the CIT. As shown in Table 2, three major categories--Driving Practices, Physical Condition, and Attitude--were further divided in 35 subcategories.

A strength of the CIT is the opportunity to view behavior from a wide range of relevant perspectives, thus minimizing biases. This discussion of results will begin with critical behaviors described by all sample groups combined. There were, however, some differences across groups. Discussion of the combined descriptions is therefore followed by a discussion of those provided by the individual sample groups.

All Sample Groups Combined

As might be expected in a study of behaviors, Driving Practices is the largest of the three major categories, comprising 1271 of the 1838 critical behaviors, and 22 of the 35 subcategories (Table 2). As might also be expected, there were far more unsafe than safe behaviors described in this category--784 to 487. It is apparently easier to recall observed unsafe behaviors, perhaps because they draw attention, are dangerous, and can lead to punishment, whereas safe behaviors can be taken for granted and go unnoticed, and in any case are seldom rewarded.

Table 2

Categories and Subcategories of Safe and Unsafe
Older Driver Behavior by Frequency and Percentage
All Sample Groups Combined*

Category and Subcategory	Safe f	Safe %[1]	Unsafe f	Unsafe %	Total f	Total %
DRIVING PRACTICES	487	26.50	784	42.65	1271	69.15
Knowledge of Operation of Car	16	0.87	5	0.27	21	1.14
Condition/Preparation of Car	32	1.74	9	0.49	41	2.23
Knowledge of Rules of Road	13	0.71	46	2.50	59	3.21
Planning Routes	35	1.90	8	0.44	43	2.34
Seatbelt Use	56	3.05	14	0.76	70	3.81
Entering Traffic	5	0.27	31	1.69	36	1.96
Signaling	32	1.74	53	2.88	85	4.62
Response to Road Signs and Signals	11	0.60	84	4.57	95	5.17
Speed	34	1.85	113	6.15	147	8.00
Lane Behavior	30	1.63	113	6.15	143	7.78
Passing	5	0.27	5	0.27	10	0.54
Left Turns	10	0.54	71	3.86	81	4.41
Right Turns	7	0.38	25	1.36	32	1.74
Yielding/Merging	18	0.98	18	0.98	36	1.96
Use of Brakes	0	0.00	10	0.54	10	0.54
Stopping	8	0.44	18	0.98	26	1.41
Backing/Parking	4	0.22	33	1.80	37	2.01
Control of Car	4	0.22	4	0.22	8	0.44
Safety Sense/Judgment	49	2.67	27	1.47	76	4.13
General Responsiveness to Environment	93	5.06	35	1.90	128	6.96
Attention to Driving	16	0.87	45	2.45	61	3.32
Intersection Behavior	9	0.49	17	0.92	26	1.41

*Based on a total of 1838 Critical Behaviors

[1]Computed to four decimal places and rounded off to the nearest hundredth

Table 2 (Continued)

Category and Subcategory	Safe f	Safe %[1]	Unsafe f	Unsafe %	Total f	Total %
PHYSICAL CONDITION	49	2.66	180	9.80	229	12.45
Body Size	2	0.11	12	0.65	14	0.76
Vision, Hearing and Other Senses	5	0.27	61	3.32	66	3.59
Flexibility and Muscle Strength	2	0.11	4	0.22	6	0.33
Reaction Time/Coordination	6	0.33	15	0.82	21	1.14
Mental Status	28	1.52	66	3.59	94	5.11
Illness and Disability	3	0.16	15	0.82	18	0.98
Alcohol and Drug Use	3	0.16	7	0.38	10	0.54
ATTITUDE	236	12.84	102	5.55	338	18.39
Awareness of Limits	68	3.70	40	2.18	108	5.88
Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility	50	2.72	30	1.63	80	4.35
Courtesy	79	4.30	16	0.87	95	5.17
Openness to Learning	25	1.36	0	0.00	25	1.36
Regard for Laws and Regulations	4	0.22	13	0.71	17	0.92
Caution	10	0.54	3	0.16	13	0.71
TOTAL	772	42.00	1066	58.00	1838	100.00

Driving Practices

The unsafe descriptions generally confirmed what is already known as to just where older drivers exhibit the greatest problems, but it is interesting to see how widely distributed the unsafe actions are. Clearly, interventions would have to cover many subcategories to achieve large reductions in unsafe behavior.

Pervasive throughout the unsafe descriptions provided by all the contributing groups were driving too slowly, failing to position the car correctly for turning, or turning from an improper lane or at an improper time or pace at intersections (especially when turning left). Lane straddling, weaving, and changing lanes without signaling also were mentioned frequently, as was lack of knowledge of rules of the road, backing up after missing an exit (especially on interstates), contributing to unsafe action at stop signs, and failure to respond properly to various road signs and signals. Inattention to driving was also frequently mentioned.

More older drivers than not were proficient in knowledge of safe operation of their cars; checking and adjusting mirrors before starting was most frequently mentioned in this respect, with seat adjustment second.

Unsafe actions in this subcategory included being unable to locate the high beam/dimmer switch, having to look down to locate the brake or accelerator pedal before applying it, and being unused to the size and weight of the vehicle being driven (e.g., motorhome), and consequently straddling the center line and failing to gain extra speed before going uphill.

Condition and/or Preparation of the car was another area in which more safe than unsafe behaviors were described. Maintaining an older car in excellent condition was most frequently mentioned, with keeping windows, windshield, headlights, and taillights clean a close second. Maintaining proper tire pressure and carrying emergency equipment also appeared in the safe descriptions. Conversely, dirty windshields, poor maintenance, and lack of preparation for road emergencies were considered unsafe.

Knowledge of Rules of Road appeared far more frequently as <u>absence</u> than as <u>possession</u>--46 to 13. Among the unsafe behaviors were stopping in the merging lane (especially on interstates), using a turning lane for passing, not understanding the meaning of stop signs and other signs and signals ("Why should I have to wait there when no other traffic is coming?"), backing up on an expressway to read a missed exit, and driving with four-way flashers or high beams on when not required. Safe behavior descriptions were quite the opposite: understanding and paying attention to road signs and signals.

The safe older drivers plan routes more often and more effectively than their unsafe counterparts. Most frequently, safe route planning involves avoiding left turns by making right turns to get to one's destination, traveling at less congested times, and knowing exactly where one is going. On the other hand, unsafe route planning behavior is marked by uncertainty about the location of one's destination, and unfamiliarity with the highway conditions in the area.

The division of opinion on Seatbelt Use is clear: older "safe" drivers fasten their seatbelts and insist that passengers do also, while older "unsafe" drivers do neither.

Entering Traffic brings far more descriptions of unsafe than of safe behavior. The few critical "safe" reports describe looking carefully, all ways, before entering traffic, and then doing so smoothly. Most of the described unsafe behaviors include failing to look adequately before joining traffic from a side road, parking lot, shopping center, alley, or apartment complex, and then entering the traffic stream too quickly or too slowly, thus interfering with traffic already there.

The Signaling of safe drivers was done properly and sufficiently in advance to influence other drivers. Unsafe critical signaling behavior was not to signal at all, even though required, especially when turning or changing lanes. Other frequently described unsafe behaviors were signaling too far away or not soon enough in advance, or failing to turn the indicator off after reason for turning it on had passed.

Failing to respond properly or at all to road signs and signals was a frequently described unsafe behavior. Running a red light or a stop sign or rolling through the latter were most commonly cited. Stopping on a green light for no apparent reason, going the wrong way on a one-way street or exit or entrance ramp, also were among the more frequently observed unsafe acts. On the other hand, the safe behaviors included full compliance to signs, stopping completely at red lights and stop signs, and checking traffic before proceeding through the latter.

The subcategory Speed included the most highly charged descriptions. While a small fraction of the unsafe behaviors described older drivers going faster than their limitations would suggest, the overwhelming majority of "unsafes" were those going "20 mph in a 45 mph zone," or "going too slowly in a passing lane," or "driving slow and jerky," and generally driving below the speed limit and/or flow of traaffic, and thus getting in the way of following drivers, or unintentionally encouraging them to take risks in passing.

It was apparent that slow drivers are a greater irritant than fast divers, perhaps because although the latter come and go, taking some risks in the process, they are not around long as objects of irrtation. One might settle for "hoping he (or she) is caught." Slow drivers, on the other hand, can block progress for long periods, and instill resentment, frustration, and hostility among those trying to pass. Yet some slow

driving doubtless stems from an older driver performing within his or her acknowledged limits. Also, in numerous cases, the "slow" driver is actually driving at the posted speed limit that the impatient drivers, temporarily slowed down, seem anxious to exceed.

It is important to note here that descriptions provided by older drivers, many of them autobiographical, gave valid reasons, from their point of view, for driving more slowly than others might wish. They credited a slower pace with the ability to avoid an accident or dangerous traffic situation, because going slower gave them time to anticipate or interpret what was happening, and to take the best evasive, defensive or preventive action of which they were capable. They did not rush into intersections, or to pass or to turn too quickly into what they could not see. Thus older drivers appear to be reinforced, by their own experiences and watching other drivers, to practice conservative and cautious, albeit slower driving. This is generally an unappreciated safe older driver behavior that has paid off for them, but otherwise has received little or no positive attention.

Perhaps some answers in this area can be found in the descriptions of safe behavior. The safe older drivers maintained a steady and consistent speed, obeying the limit and/or keeping up with traffic flow. They also kept to the right, in the center of the lane, and did not interfere with passing. Even when they were driving at the speed limit, but noticed traffic piling up behind them, they would take the opportunity to pull off the road and let the faster cars go by.

Lane Behavior was another subcategory in which unsafe descriptions were far more prevalent than safe. There were many descriptions of driving on the wrong side of or in the middle of the road, and into the lane of traffic coming from the opposite direction. Weaving, straddling lane markers, and drifting from one lane to another were also among the described dangerous actions. Changing lanes without signaling or checking the blind spot for other traffic were also common. The safe descriptions were of maintaining proper lane position, checking blind spot and signaling before changing lanes, and accommodating one's lane position and speed to allow other drivers to pass or merge safely.

Passing behavior related primarily to the older driver in passing other drivers (a relatively infrequent event when compared with being passed by other drivers). Here the principal unsafe behavior was cutting in too soon and slowing down after passing. The safe actions were described as passing after checking blind spot and signaling, and making a smooth return to lane after passing, while maintaining a speed sufficient to keep drivers passed from having to slow down.

Descriptions of left turn behavior were overwhelmingly unsafe: turning from the wrong lane, too sharply or widely; turning suddenly but progressing slowly; positioning the car in a way which blocked oncoming traffic or the interaction after a signal change. Numerous of the unsafe left-turn behaviors were at intersections, where events can occur so

rapidly they are difficult to absorb and act on quickly and correctly. The safe behaviors were performed by older drivers who had apparently mastered such intersections. They allowed traffic to clear before turning; they made left turns easier for the cars behind them by moving rapidly at the opportune moment; and they turned from the proper lane into the proper lane. Some older drivers avoid left turns whenever possible, primarily by getting to their destination by making only right turns. (See under the Planning Routes subcategory discussed earlier.)

Unsafe Right Turns included swinging too wide before turning, turning too short or sharply and jumping the curb or road edge, turning from the wrong side of road or from an incorrect lane position, and encroaching on the oncoming lane of traffic after the turn. Safe performance was, in the main, the opposite of the unsafe, and was simply described as "turning properly."

Yielding/Merging behaviors did not appear as frequently as the investigators were led to expect from the literature. In the main, the unsafe maneuvers were: failing to yield the right of way when joining traffic, and merging so slowly that traffic was disrupted. Failing to yield the right of way to pedestrians was another unsafe behavior, as was not being sure of what to do about merging when entering a freeway--most commonly reflected in coming to a complete stop at the end of the ramp instead of attempting to approach the speed of the traffic flow before joining it. The safe behaviors in this subcategory reflected understanding when to yield, and/or doing so when appropriate. These included yielding to pedestrians, and to discourteous and unsafe drivers who did not have the right of way but were going to take it anyway; proper merging and yielding procedures when entering or leaving a freeway, as well as extending merging opportunities to those entering traffic.

Use of Brakes comprises only unsafe descriptions, mainly excessive braking, which is confusing and disrupting to following traffic. Suddenly "jamming" on the brakes for no apparent reason was also considered unsafe, as was stepping on the brakes every time a road sign or signal was sighted.

Stopping at unexpected times in unexpected places dominated the unsafe descriptions in this subcategory: stopping suddenly with no warning, or 40 feet ahead of the intersection, or into the intersection, or where there were no stop signs or other traffic, or suddenly with no signal before pulling off the road, or stopping completely before pulling into a driveway. Other unsafe practices included stopping for everyone even though having the right-of-way and the other driver was stopped and yielding, pulling only partially off the road onto the shoulder before stopping, and stopping right in the middle of the lane.

The safe behaviors included stopping not too close to or far from the car ahead, signaling and pulling well off the road before stopping, stopping neither too far ahead of or into an intersection, and leaving one's self plenty of stopping space.

Backing/Parking is another subcategory with predominantly unsafe descriptions. All of the safe behaviors related to checking to the rear before backing, whereas the unsafe behaviors were mainly the contrary--failing to check to the rear before backing, in a wide variety of settings and circumstances. Backing out of a driveway and hitting a car parked across the street, backing into a car parked behind in a parking lot, backing into a chain link fence, backing out of a supermarket parking space and hitting a moving car or a shopping cart, and backing out into the street and hitting a moving vehicle are some of many illustrations. Parking too far from the curb, or over the curb, or outside of the lined boundaries of a parking space were also mentioned.

Control of Car was seldom described one way or the other. Among the unsafe descriptions were being "hesitant and unsure" in a way which caused confusion among following drivers and forced them to do whatever they had to do to "get out of the way" as soon as possible. Other unsafe descriptions included "overacted to a minor potential hazard ahead and suddenly pulled to the right causing his vehicle to go into a ditch."

Safe behaviors included control that avoided accidents--"able to stop safely and surely without much advance warning," and "maneuvered car to complete stop on shoulder of road."

Among the larger subcategories, Safety Sense/Judgment is something of a catch-all for descriptions of behaviors that in total were numerous but that in fact comprise a long list of single or relatively rare events:

--getting out of a car curb side, away from traffic;

--taking breaks every two hours on a long trip;

--using hand signals when sunlight might reduce visibility of turn signals;

--putting a safety triangle in the road to warn oncoming motorists of a breakdown;

--stopping far enough from an intersection to give a truck driver room to turn;

--pulling well off the road and parking until heavy rain subsides;

--turning lights on during heavy daytime rain or snow;

--pumping brakes in wet weather to be sure they are working;

--wearing flat comfortable shoes (not high heels) when driving;

--reducing speed in anticipation of icy spots.

On the unsafe side are:

--getting out of a car on the traffic side;

--coming too close to pedestrians or joggers or bicyclists;

--repeatedly stopping in the middle of a busy street to check house numbers;

--driving with a door open;

--deliberately bumping the rear of a vehicle driving slowly while looking for a parking space;

--stopping on railroad tracks;

--swerving for a small animal and losing control of the car;

--driving into a blinding sunset and striking an unseen pedestrian.

In short, the behaviors in this subcategory read like a litany of the "do's" and "don'ts" of safe driving--habits perhaps gained or lost or never acquired in years of driving.

General Responsiveness to Driving Environment as a subcategory is best defined as ability to "read the road," a phrase used in many descriptions. Older drivers seem to "shine" in this area, perhaps because the safe performance they show has been acquired through long experience. The safe behaviors described in this subcategory generally have to do with being alert to what is going on and taking the appropriate action in relation to it:

--pulling off the road to allow backed-up traffic to pass;

--driving slowly where children might dash out from behind parked cars or other obstructed areas;

--observing the actions of other drivers that might suggest inadequate control, such as drunken driving and taking the appropriate avoidance action;

--pulling off the road to allow speeding trucks or cars with jeering teenagers to pass;

--allowing adequate stopping distance between one's self and cars and obstacles ahead, especially during inclement weather.

The unsafe behaviors were mainly illustrations of inability to "read the road":

--not being alert to road conditions or the actions of other drivers;

--suddenly finding one's self in a dangerous situation even though there were adequate clues for anticipating it;

--being oblivious to one's own actions as an influence on other traffic;

--driving as if one were the only person on the road;

--driving as if "wearing blinders."

Attention to Driving is loaded in favor of unsafe behavior. This comprised such actions as:

--looking around frequently at the scenery or generally sightseeing;

--"talking up a storm" with passengers;

--looking away from the road and at passengers;

--keeping one or no hands on the steering wheel while pointing or gesturing to emphasize a conversational point;

--generally neglecting the immediate driving environment;

--paying no attention to other traffic while driving slowly and looking for an address;

--not watching the road for what seemed like a split second and "losing control and running off the road";

--losing concentration and running into the back of another vehicle.

The safe behaviors reflected the minimization of distractions--driving with the radio off, minimum talking to passengers, concentration on the driving environment and driving task.

In terms of accidents and violations frequently found in the literature, the performance of older drivers at intersections (Intersection Behavior) shows much room for improvement. In this study, however, intersections per se did not appear to a major extent in descriptions. Left turns at complex or four-way crossing intersections showed up in some of the unsafe behaviors described, but left turns appeared in unsafe behaviors at less complex interactions as well. The investigators therefore decided to place left turns in a separate subcategory regardless of the highway configuration at which they occurred.

Here it seems appropriate to say that placing 1838 critical behaviors into 35 subcategories inevitably led to some overlapping. Descriptions of critical behaviors frequently reflected the complexity of the driving task and driving environment; seldom was any driving maneuver sufficiently

isolated for unquestioned assignment to one category. Nevertheless, that is what the investigators have attempted (after the interjudge reliability exercise described earlier)--mutually exclusive assignment of critical behaviors to categories whenever possible.

Most unsafe behaviors at intersections were related to failures to check traffic from all directions before entering an intersection, and lack of alertness to confusing or inaccurate signals given by other drivers. At the more complex intersections, unsafe performance was due to ignorance of "rules of the road" (which may vary from place to place) such as how far one pulls into the intersection while awaiting a chance to turn, and how many cars may turn after the caution light appears. Safe behaviors were attributed to a total checking of all traffic and signals before proceeding through an intersection, and a knowledge of how far to go into the intersection while awaiting a chance to proceed.

Physical Condition

As stated earlier, the category Physical Condition could sound more like a causal influence rather than as a grouping of critical driving behaviors. However, some descriptions made clear that a number of behaviors originated in the same physical condition, such as vision. In these cases, the investigators assigned the description to the subcategory Vision, Hearing and Other Senses, under the category Physical Condition, rather than inflate the various subcategories under the category Driving Practices. In this way we were able to contribute to an account of not only what older drivers do safely or unsafely, but why they are doing it.

Among the unsafe behaviors relating to Body Size were: "could barely see over the steering wheel," "seat was too low to have clear vision," "steering wheel appeared to cut right across line of vision," "could hardly see over dashboard," and "seat was too low to allow clear vision." People shrink in height as they age (U.S. Department of Transportation, 1980).

The safe behaviors were essentially remedies to the unsafe--"had seat raised so short stature was no hazard," and "traded large limo for midsize car and could see out and handle better." The remedies taken by some older drivers are both sensible and available to all.

It goes without saying that Vision, Hearing and Other Senses are associated with driving. To paraphrase an old baseball saying, "You can hit what you can't see." The unsafe behaviors dominated this subcategory, and most of them related to vision. "A neighbor, who is legally blind but still drives, stopped suddenly at least three to four car lengths behind where he thought he was," "has cataracts and is still driving after several accidents," "elderly couple in their 80's--he could drive, but can't see; she can see but is deaf and can't drive. He drives, she navigates." Other "unsafe" descriptions concerned:

--inability to judge distance;

--driving after dark even though a restricted license prohibited it;

--cataract interfering with vision;

--visual problems leading to delayed braking at intersections and cross walks;

--failure to see the other car in head-on and broadside collisions;

--going by stop signs because of failure to see them;

--inability to read posted speed and directional signs;

--inability to see joggers and pedestrians, almost hitting a child standing on a road shoulder.

Hearing problems were described as "couldn't hear name or directions and therefore could not follow them," "had great difficulty hearing and understanding, even though I spoke slowly and loudly," "as a result of impaired hearing and defective eyesight he drove in front of a train," and "couldn't hear sirens, and poor vision didn't help." Safe behaviors in this subcategory included "because of poor peripheral vision always takes a 'co-pilot' to help watch out for other cars," "has good side vision which helps in taking evasive action," "scans more and moves eyes constantly to compensate for reduced vision," "wife helps in observing intersections and advising on lane changes," "has had cataracts removed and now drives much better," "was fitted with a hearing aid and now feels he is a safer driver."

Flexibility and Muscle Strength appeared as factors in very few descriptions. The safe behaviors were a measure of good physical condition, which in turn produced good operation of the vehicular controls. The unsafe behavior was equated with physical deficiencies: an inability to turn one's head to check to the rear when backing out of the driveway, thereby preciptating a number of near misses; difficulty getting into and out of the vehicle due to feebleness and lack of flexibility and consequently getting out on the driver's side instead of the safe side; weakness in legs which prevented an emergency stop and contributed to an accident; and not having the strength to apply or release the hand brake or activate the gear shift.

The subcategory Reaction Time and Coordination showed more unsafe than safe behaviors. The unsafe were described in such terms as "reflexes so slow that by time he looked both ways and slowly pulled onto highway, another vehicle that wasn't initially a hazard had time to become one," "accelerated instead of applying brakes," "his physical condition made him uncertain about the movement of his right foot," "grabbed gearshift and put it in neutral thinking she had put on right turn signal," "her eye-hand coordination was out of sync," "held gas pedal and brake down at same time," "saw car coming but couldn't react in time to avoid collision."

Safe descriptions included "quick reflexes in hitting brakes and avoiding collision," "demonstrated excellent coordination in driving in heavy traffic," "kept right foot poised over brake pedal to compensate for slower reaction time," "his quick reaction saved three lives," and "although age has slowed reaction time, he compensates with better judgment."

Mental Status was the subcategory of Physical Condition to which most of the unsafe behaviors were assigned. These included:

--being "totally out of it, unaware of what was going on about him";

--"appeared totally confused and turned from a busy intersection into the wrong lane, forcing an oncoming driver over the curb to avoid a collision";

--"unaware of the hazard he created when he pulled his old heavy car out from a side street without stopping and proceeded across 4 lanes at 20 mph without looking or stopping";

--"didn't know where he was going";

--"confused and frightened older driver and wife were in motorhome stopped in the middle of a mountain road";

--"panicked and turned into traffic at intersection when emergency vehicles came up from behind";

--"became nervous and pulled out in front of oncoming traffic";

--"became very hostile and upset, straddled the lane dividing line and couldn't seem to correct his position";

--"car pulled out into heavy traffic slowed down to 20 mph with driver apparently oblivious to what he was doing";

--"when I stopped her she was unaware of where she wanted to go";

--"backed into pedestrian who screamed, was unnerved, and stepped on accelerator, crushing victim under the car";

--"the driver was constantly lost";

--"was unaware that his car was rolling backwards down the hill";

--"had to be told to take off emergency brake and put on wipers, even though car would not move ahead and there was zero visibility due to the heavy rain";

--"forgot he had put gear in neutral and was accelerating more heavily as the car rolled backwards down the hill";

--"didn't know where he was going or how to get there";

--"passed car, forgot he was on two-lane highway and stayed in opposite lane, resulting in head-on collision";

--"looked perplexed and confused, going in wrong direction up exit ramp."

The safe acts primarily demonstrated an alertness that avoided accidents in a wide variety of circumstances. They included: remaining calm when crowded off the road by a passing truck and in the face of other harassment, and being confident about one's ability and sure about where one was heading and how to get there. Safe behaviors showed confidence and serenity, even after an accident. "She was in control of herself, the situation, and the car," "didn't panic when hit by another car" are illustrations.

In the Illness and Disability subcategory, descriptions of the unsafe once again outnumbered the safe. Drivers who had suffered strokes but who were unwilling to recognize the resulting handicaps were prominently featured in the unsafe descriptions. Arthritic conditions which restricted head and body movements were also cited. Fainting and passing out from one condition or another were included.

Safe elderly drivers included one who felt ill and immediately stopped the car and asked someone else to take over, one with a missing left hand who nevertheless drove excellently, and one who gave up driving voluntarily after passing out for a few seconds behind the wheel.

The subcategory Alcohol and Drug Use included few descriptions of any kind. Nevertheless, it is known that older persons consume a disproportionate amount of both prescription and over-the-counter drugs. These can have a deleterious effect on driving skills. The lack of descriptions in this category suggests that the sample used in the study, including older drivers themselves, may be unaware of the extent to which alcohol and drugs play a role in the unsafe behavior of older drivers. Few as they were, the unsafe acts mentioned in this subcategory included driving after drinking enough alcoholic beverages to be an impaired driver, taking medications for conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and schizophrenia which led to inattention to other vehicles on the road, running stop signs, and other unsafe behavior.

The safe drivers were those who allowed someone else to take the wheel after they themselves had drunk too much to drive safely.

Attitude

Not unlike Physical Condition, Attitude as a category seems to consist less of descriptions of safe and unsafe driving than factors which cause it. However, numerous descriptions of driving behavior could be

traced to just one basic attitude, such as Awareness of Limits, or Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility, or Courtesy. In these cases, the investigators placed the description in the appropriate subcateory under Attitude, rather than in one under Driving Practices or Physical Condition.

It was in the Attitude category that safe behavior prevailed. It appears that the compensations made by many older drivers for deficiencies in Driving Practices and Physical Condition are based in their attitudes about safe driving, and Awareness of Limits is one of the more important among these. Among the descriptions of safe behavior were:

--asking a younger person to drive in one's place, especially after dark or in heavy traffic;

--taking breaks every two hours on long trips;

--asking for assistance in getting out of a tight parking space;

--recognizing slower reaction time and taking such actions as placing one's foot over the brake when approaching an intersection;

--asking passengers not to smoke or engage in excessively animated discussions or other distracting practices;

--stopping to rest, or interrupting a trip to return home, when one begins to feel tired or ill;

--asking someone else to drive when tired or after having a few drinks;

--equipping the car with special mirrors and other safety devices to overcome impairments;

--making regular visits to an eye doctor for remediation of visual defects;

--using passengers as navigators and in other ways to facilitate safe driving;

--suggesting that someone else drive if alcohol has been consumed;

--being familiar with the possible effects of prescription and other drugs on the driving task and acting accordingly;

--refusing challenges to "race" other drivers;

--compensating for impaired hearing by watching other cars for such actions as pulling to the curb for an ambulance or police car;

--seeing a professional to keep hearing at its best;

--keeping up with changes in traffic regulations and conditions;

--restricting driving to familiar areas, taking someone else along when traveling in an unfamiliar town;

--following totally the restrictions placed on one's license;

--recognizing the influence of aging on one's abilities and acting accordingly;

--realizing the futility of acting out frustrations on the highway;

--realizing that you yourself should not do the same things that irritate you when done by other drivers;

--paying attention to comments by family and friends about one's driving ability;

--not playing radio, and leaving windows open a few inches because of impaired hearing;

--giving up license voluntarily after an at-fault collision;

--keeping a stock of food and other household necessities to avoid trips in inclement weather;

--using local roads instead of expressways because of difficulty keeping up with speeds on the latter;

--devising ways not to let one's mind wander while driving;

--voluntarily restricting the times and places one drives or giving up driving altogether.

The unsafe behaviors come down to not recognizing one's limits, even when pointed out by others. These include:

--inadequate sleep or fatigue that leads to falling asleep at the wheel;

--failing to see any significance in friends' declining without reason your offer of a ride;

--driving long periods without rest and dozing at the wheel or running off the road;

--believing one is a superior driver in spite of evidence to the contrary;

--exercising a "bull-headedness" that fails to recognize one's physical limitations;

--not accepting the fact that one is no longer a safe driver but directing hostility and blame toward other drivers;

--not paying attention to restrictions on one's license;

--against good advice driving after several minor accidents and then suffering a major one;

--feeling "picked on" by licensing authorities when called in for re-examination;

--denying hitting a parked car even though observed in the act.

Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility is another subcategory under Attitude in which older drivers help each other and themselves compensate for abilities lost in Driving Practices and Physical Condition. Among the safe behaviors described:

--passengers insist that a poor driver allow someone else to drive;

--passengers insist that the driver obey the rules of the road;

--driver stopping and getting out to direct traffic around a disabled car on the crest of a hill;

--honking horn and signaling to warn driver in another car of an approaching fire truck;

--stopping car, putting on emergency flashers, and carrying young children to the other side of a street they were attempting to cross;

--noticing an accident just ahead after rounding a sharp curve, driver puts on emergency flashers to alert other drivers to what faces them ahead;

--driver puts on flashers, stops car, and helps an old man cross a street with no signal;

--driver pulls out of line on the shoulder of the road, stops car, and confronts young passengers who were making derogatory remarks about his careful driving;

--driver stops on interstate to assist elderly couple whose car has stalled, fixes car, and follows them 40 miles to see them home safely;

--older man stops his car and gets into that of a woman who was trapped going the wrong way on a one-way street, and enlists the help of a young driver in directing traffic so that the woman's car can be safely turned in the correct direction;

--pulls car off road and removes boards that were strewn over the road;

--pulls off road and removes a muffler from the road;

--sets flares behind stalled car and uses CB to get assistance for stranded motorist;

--asks to be re-examined for driving ability after partial leg amputation;

--takes a driver improvement course every two years;

--walks around car to check for obstacles before driving off;

--talks a friend who is a poor driver into giving up his car;

--postpones trip because of weather;

--talks friends into chartering a bus for difficult trip instead of taking their own cars;

--pumps brakes to warn following car of icy stretch ahead;

--convinces driver and other passengers to buckle up;

--makes citizen's arrest of teenagers who would not allow elderly driver to pass;

--directs traffic at accident scene until the police arrive.

The unsafe descriptions included:

--"deliberately driving slowly and close to double yellow line, forcing reckless young drivers to cross yellow line in order to pass";

--"continuing on unperturbed after nearly hitting person in pedestrian lane of supermarket parking lot";

--a blind driver and deaf passenger combining talents to drive, forcing other drivers out of their way hastily;

--relying on older truck driver to signal when to pass and suffering a collision;

--feeling it was OK to back into concrete wall because she "paid taxes and had lots of money to pay for the wall";

--stopping abruptly at crosswalks and elsewhere in a habitual effort to frighten pedestrians and other drivers;

--failing to accept obvious responsibility for an accident, and blaming the other driver.

Road Courtesy includes safe behaviors such as:

--shifting to the middle lane to allow the car behind to make a right on red;

--always being prepared to yield the right of way;

--"letting the other person who wants the parking space you think is yours to cut in front of you and have it";

--positioning your car to allow another car safe and easy access to or from a parking space;

--positioning car to allow maximum room for impatient drivers to pass;

--stopping car to allow pedestrians to cross in an unmarked crossing;

--yielding right of way at four-way stop for benefit of uninformed or discourteous drivers;

--allowing older pedestrians adequate time to cross the street even though the signal has changed;

--moving as far right as possible on long steep grades to let faster drivers pass;

--stopping to allow another car to make a left turn into a place of business;

--yielding right of way to permit oncoming driver to turn ahead of long stream of traffic;

--giving drunken drivers and excessively fast or erratic drivers as much room as possible;

--slowing down to let other drivers join lane safely;

--keeping intersection clear even if it means waiting another turn;

--maintaining a serene and pleasant countenance when driving;

--allowing another driver to get into the correct lane for his or her next maneuver;

--allowing a miscreant driver back into lane after inability to complete an unwise or illegal pass.

The unsafe descriptions included:

--forcing one's way into traffic;

--constantly deploring the density of the traffic and criticizing other drivers;

--harassing pedestrians who are slow in crossing;

--muttering swear words and displaying vulgar gestures to other drivers;

--verbally abusing other drivers;

--"a watch out and get out of my way attitude";

--exercising one's right of way to the point of a near miss or collision;

--forcing one's way by positioning the car to block those who have the right of way;

--"horn blowing and shouting";

--refusing to move either right or left to let another vehicle pass;

--driving slowly but speeding up when another car attempts to pass.

Openness to Learning was intended to juxtapose descriptions of older drivers who are learning or who wish to learn and those who are close-minded or already "know it all." However, none of the collected descriptions fits the latter (or unsafe) portion of the category. Those in the safe portion included:

--comparing one's hurried lane-changing behavior with that of another older driver who stayed in lane at the speed limit, both arriving at the same destination at the same time and learning a lesson;

--seeking confirmation of or information on correct way to stop and make turns;

--reading and trying to do everything recommended in the driver's manual;

--preparing for licensing examination by reading manual and taking a driving course;

--thanking persons for pointing out one's bad habits;

--determining not to repeat errors;

--wishing to remain current in rules of the road;

--paying careful attention to instructions given during road examinations for licensure.

Regard for Rules and Regulations was the only subcategory under Attitude that contained more unsafe than safe behaviors. Unsafe behaviors included: driving on a revoked license; parking in a no-parking zone; crossing in front of a train while crossing lights were flashing; making pedestrian with right of way wait until after his car had passed; and stopping in middle of road whenever seeing something of interest.

The safe descriptions were such as: staying within the posted speed limit and obeying all laws; resisting pressure from other drivers to go around lowered train crossing gate; knowing the rules about and importance of stop and tail lights and not going farther until they were repaired.

The final subcategory under Attitude, one which poses a dilemma, is Caution: what some older drivers regard as safe can be viewed by others as unsafe. For example: "His careful, cautious driving was a danger to all other drivers." "The car moved slowly, stopped at a signal that wasn't on, moved slowly and cautiously into the acceleration lane and stopped, and the driver looked all ways before attempting to join traffic." "He is so unsure of his driving abilities that slow has come to mean safe." The safe behaviors focus on generally driving cautiously and safely, with more specific illustrations such as, "He would have been hit by a backing car if he had not been cautious and going very slowly."

Summary of Results of Combined Descriptions (And a Few Suggestions)

After reading and analyzing the hundreds of critical behaviors collected in this study, the investigators have concluded that drivers over age 55 are pretty much like all other drivers--there are safe ones and unsafe ones at all age levels. This conclusion is supported by a previous study (Fine, Malfetti, & Shoben, 1965) in which one of the present investigators used the Critical Incident Technique to abstract and categorize thousands of descriptions of "good" and "bad" driving by all age drivers. The differences by age group seem to appear when one examines the extra ingredients, those that contribute to the totality of safe behavior on the highway--helping stranded motorists, removing dangerous highway debris, yielding the right of way to avoid accidents, etc.

For drivers over 55, especially at the upper reaches, Driving Practices are loaded toward the unsafe. The same is true of Physical Condition, and some of this loading doubtless is due to age-related illnesses and disabilities, which leave their mark on driving proficiency. But a thorough reading of the disproportionately large number of safe behaviors under Attitude suggests a contribution of older drivers to

safety which transcends their shortcomings in other areas. They should not be judged only by what they seem to be doing wrong, but by what they are doing right.

The study also provided assurance that no plague of gray-haired drivers is going to threaten safe highway travel. On occasion, uneasiness has been generated by statistics on the "graying" of the nation and the great risk that older drivers and pedestrians represent for themselves and others. The media have sometimes intensified that uneasiness by highlighting the consequences of accidents for which older drivers were culpable. There is, however, much evidence in the safe behaviors described in this study that older drivers can perform quite safely, in large measure by recognizing their limitations and adapting their driving patterns to them. There is also evidence of their positive "road" attitude and sense of social responsibility which translates into actions to assist other drivers, young and old, to avoid hazardous highway situations. Courteous older drivers do much to help calm the frequently turbulent flow of traffic on our highways. Yet much of that socially responsible action goes unheralded.

The unsafe descriptions generally confirmed accident and violation data on the greatest problems of older drivers. Driving too slowly, improper lane behavior, failing to see or pay attention to road signs and signals, and turning left (especially at intersections) were the shortcomings most frequently found in the Driving Practices category. Others frequently described were leaving turn signals on beyond the intention to turn or after turning, and talking a "blue streak," waving arms, pointing, gesturing, and turning head to talk to passengers.

Unsafe lane and turning behavior included failing to position one's car correctly for turning, and turning from an improper lane or at an improper time or pace at intersections. Some older drivers straddled lanes and wove and changed lanes without signaling. Others missed stop signs, or rolled through them, or stopped too far in advance of or beyond them (occasionally into the intersection). Still others backed without looking to the rear, had difficulty entering and exiting parking locations from or into busy streets, and when entering streets and highways from feeder roads. Some entered freeways too slowly, hesitating too long or stopping completely before joining traffic.

It might seem to the informed reader that these same types of poor performance are seen among drivers of all ages. The investigators would mainly agree, with one or two exceptions, explained herewith and accompanied by some suggestions.

That older persons as a group drive too slowly, impeding the progress of traffic or provoking other drivers to take risks in attempting to pass is unquestionably the unsafe practice that generates the most irritation. This in spite of the fact that older drivers may be recognizing their age-related limits and/or paying attention to the posted speed limit. The safe behaviors described in this study suggest that periodically pulling

off to the side of the highway to let faster traffic pass (whether exceeding the speed limit or not) is a way to reduce irritation and risk-taking. Another partial solution, quite apart from driver behavior, might be more practicable (usually higher) speed limits. Law-abiding older drivers seem to find themselves the target of drivers less inclined to live within the letter of the law.

Intergenerational Education

This is perhaps a good place to point to the need for intergenerational education. Older drivers and younger drivers see each other as the most hazardous group on the road. They are quick to point out each other's unsafe behavior. One of the investigators currently is involved in a young driver study that produced the following statements: "They [older drivers] stay in the left lane when they shouldn't be, and I hate to stereotype them, but a lot of them do this; and give them their due, that's fine, but they should be slipped over in the right lane, because that's where slower cars should be moving."

"Yeh, I drive down the highway at a pretty good speed. I do about 70 down there but in the city I like to do about 40. I don't like these old foggies in the city. They're too slow, way too slow."

On the other hand, at least 75 of the responses from the six sample groups participating in this study said something similar to the effect that, "There is no older driver problem; there is a young driver problem, and that is what you should be working on. They speed too much and are dangerous and reckless on the highway."

The thrust of the message from the young drivers was "Society is scrutinizing our driving because we are young while overlooking the faults of older drivers because they are the more established members of society." The message from many older drivers was, "This is a youth oriented society and they are getting away with murder, while we are being picked on for being old."

A better understanding by old and young drivers of each other's limits and strengths would probably improve conditions for all road users. Including sections on younger and older drivers in state driver manuals and in driver education curriculum materials might be a good start. Attention to young driver behavior as part of older driver improvement courses might also help.

Older Driver Improvement Courses

On the subject of improvement courses, the investigators believe that the availability of such courses to older drivers and incentives to attend

them cannot be overemphasized. Many drivers over 55 (especially in the upper reaches) have had no formal instruction on how to drive, in town or on interstates; and they know little about recent changes in rules of the road. Preparation for or confirmation of practices in such areas seems to have potential for correcting many of the unsafe acts reported under Driving Practices. Some of the descriptions collected in the present study and presented in Appendix D might be used toward this end--a pointing out of the unsafe practices, followed by a discussion of the safe practices in the same areas as ways to reduce or overcome the unsafe.

Some Countermeasures

Analysis of unsafe behaviors under Driving Practices, when reviewed against their safe counterparts, suggests that some countermeasures can be found in the descriptions of Physical Condition and Attitude. Failure to pay adequate attention to poor physical conditions was frequently cited among the unsafe descriptions. The most common complaints were against those elderly who still drove in spite of serious impairments due to strokes, uncorrected cataract, legal blindness, and arthritic conditions precluding required head and joint movements; or who were too short to see over the wheel. The safe descriptions frequently referred drivers who had taken appropriate corrective action in relation to such conditions--e.g., cataract removal, extra mirrors, adjustable seats. The investigators believe all drivers, but especially the elderly, should be made aware of their shortcomings and of ways to overcome them. One of their recent publications (Malfetti & Winter, 1986) represents a start toward this end.

The Mental Status subcategory under Physical Condition was a frequent repository for the bizarre type of behavior that attracts media attention to older drivers--"totally out of it, unaware of what was going on around him," "didn't known where he was going, but slowly cut across four lanes to get there," "were sitting in their car stopped in the middle of the highway, totally disoriented and frightened," "panicked when an emergency vehicle came up behind," "backed into a pedestrian who screamed, unnerving the driver, who stepped on the accelerator, dragging and crushing the victim," "was unaware that his car was rolling down the hill." Some of these quotations and others like them are observations made by licensing examiners during road tests.

Intensive analysis of the unsafe descriptions in this category, and some speculation, led the investigators to two conclusions:

(1) The aging person is especially vulnerable to the influence of drugs, prescription and non-prescription, that are employed for relief of such conditions as high blood pressure, heart ailments, painful joints, among others (Jones, 1985; Yachmetz & Feinberg, 1987). The investigators built a corrective program from a study (Malfetti & Winter, 1978) in this area that concentrated on the drug alcohol, and might be used as a model for other drugs. At the very least, older drivers themselves and

physicians who serve them should be doing all they can to avoid the unfortunate coupling of drugs and driving, where the drugs may produce those mental states that portray some older drivers as "zombies," dangerous and out of control.

(2) Some persons described in the Mental Status subcategory were under stress or "scared"--for example, when taking a road test--and ordinarily would not behave in the ways reported. Special training of licensing examiners to recognize and attempt to reduce such stress and fright would be a helpful factor here.

Safe Driving Highlights

Safe Driving Practices included planning trips to take the safest routes--circling congested areas, choosing right turns and signalized intersections to avoid complicated or dangerous left turns. Using seatbelts and encouraging others to do so were also among these practices, along with superior car maintenance. Other safe responses described were staying aware of potential dangers by devoting maximum attention to driving, being prepared to respond to threatening situations, or deliberately restricting or giving up one's driving when serious health problems interfered.

Also among the safe descriptions were practicing the rules of the road and being careful, driving at an even speed, having a stable and steady temperament and appearing calm, confident, and capable of taking and keeping control--the kind of "in charge" driver with whom one feels both comfortable and safe.

Road courtesy was among the highlights of safe driving: slowing down to let other drivers enter lane, moving to the right lane or the shoulder to let faster drivers pass, sacrificing right of way in the interest of courtesy and safety, removing hazardous objects from the highway, and assisting stranded motorists. It is through such activities that older drivers seem to be making a contribution to traffic flow and safety that is often overlooked when evaluating their contribution to safe and unsafe highway behavior.

Ironically, some of the very behaviors that older drivers describe as safe and admirable--cautious driving, permitting other drivers to merge ahead, stopping to allow another car in or out of an entry or exit, care and patience at intersections, yielding the right of way--are among the same behaviors that other drivers describe as the slow and bad habits of older drivers that contribute to hazards. Clearly there are "ways of seeing things" that have to be reconciled, perhaps through education, for the benefit of all road users.

Finally, what the combined descriptions of all sample groups made very clear was evidence of a wide range of ability among members of a

so-called group of older drivers. There are good ones and bad ones as in all age groups.

Summary of Descriptions by Separate Sample Groups

While descriptions turned in by the six sample groups contained a large number of similar behaviors, there were also many differences due to the aforementioned "way of seeing things" from one's own perspective. The investigators examined these differences. To facilitate the examination, they color-coded by sample group the tallies and descriptive phrases of critical behaviors assigned to the 35 subcategories. This procedure led to Table 3, where critical behaviors provided by the six groups are shown by frequency and percentage for the three categories and 35 subcategories created in the study. The procedure also resulted in Table 4, which ranks the subcategories by frequency for each group.

Older Drivers Themselves

Descriptions contributed by the older drivers confirm that they see most of the same behaviors in themselves that others also see in them. However, their views on other behaviors differ somewhat from the views of other groups. To them, courteous actions figure prominently as safe behavior. Allowing another vehicle into the lane of traffic, motioning another driver ahead at a four-way stop, yielding to pedestrians even where not required, yielding right of way at intersections, operating within their personal limitations, and avoiding potentially dangerous situations--all are illustrative.

By their safe descriptions they appear to prefer responsible defensive driving, courtesy and deference as opposed to competitiveness. This is quite understandable because older drivers become progressively less good at competing with younger drivers, whether they wish to or not. Unfortunately, the same courteous and responsible behavior that they call safe is often described by the other groups as unsafe, dangerous, impeding, and frustrating. That conflict represents the biggest difference between the perceptions of older drivers and those of the other groups.

In unsafe behaviors, the older drivers' responses about driving too slowly, using lanes improperly and making left turns, and failing to respond to road signs and signals, were somewhat similar to those of the other groups, especially the licensing examiners.

Licensing Examiners

It should be added that descriptions supplied by licensing examiners frequently stemmed from actual road tests of older drivers who had been

Table 3

Categories and Subcategories of Safe and Unsafe Older Driver Behavior by Frequency and Percentage For Six Sample Groups

DRIVING PRACTICES	Safe Behaviors								Unsafe Behaviors							
	Frequencies								Frequencies							
Subcategories	AARP Drivers	State Examiners	AARP Instructors	Chiefs of Police	Experts	Carrier Drivers	Total	%[1,3]	AARP Instructors	State Examiners	AARP Instructors	Chiefs of Police	Experts	Carrier Drivers	Total	%[2,3]
Knowledge of Operation of Car	0	15	1	0	0	0	16	2.07	0	4	0	0	0	1	5	0.47
Condition/Preparation of Car	5	7	10	1	0	9	32	4.15	4	2	2	0	0	1	9	0.84
Knowledge of Rules of Road	1	6	3	0	0	3	13	1.68	6	19	10	1	0	10	46	4.32
Planning Routes	12	3	18	1	0	1	35	4.53	4	0	0	0	0	4	8	0.75
Seatbelt Use	14	14	22	5	1	0	56	7.25	4	2	6	1	0	1	14	1.31
Entering Traffic	2	1	1	1	0	0	5	0.65	15	7	5	1	1	2	31	2.91
Signaling	3	18	5	0	0	6	32	4.15	19	18	9	1	0	6	53	4.97
Response to Road Signs and Signals	3	6	1	0	0	1	11	1.42	22	42	12	2	1	5	84	7.88
Speed	5	17	3	1	0	8	34	4.40	45	28	17	4	1	18	113	10.60
Lane Behavior	3	18	3	1	0	5	30	3.89	24	43	21	6	1	18	113	10.60
Passing	0	3	2	0	0	0	5	0.65	1	2	1	0	0	1	5	0.47
Left Turns	5	5	0	0	0	0	10	1.30	31	20	11	2	6	1	71	6.66
Right Turns	0	6	0	0	0	1	7	0.91	5	18	2	0	0	0	25	2.35
Yielding/Merging	13	3	0	0	1	1	18	2.33	2	7	2	4	1	2	18	1.69
Use of Brakes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	5	2	0	0	1	2	10	0.94
Stopping	0	3	3	1	0	1	8	1.04	3	9	3	0	0	3	18	1.69
Backing/Parking	1	0	3	0	0	0	4	0.52	8	19	4	0	0	2	33	3.10
Control of Car	0	0	1	2	0	1	4	0.52	0	0	3	1	0	0	4	0.38
Safety Sense/Judgment	16	9	12	3	3	6	49	6.35	11	8	7	0	1	0	27	2.53
General Responsiveness to Environment	34	38	13	2	0	6	93	12.05	9	13	5	4	0	4	35	3.28
Attention to Driving	2	3	6	0	0	5	16	2.07	24	4	11	0	1	5	45	4.22
Intersection Behavior	0	7	0	0	1	1	9	1.17	1	15	1	0	0	0	17	1.59
Total	119	182	107	18	6	55	487	63.08	243	282	132	27	14	86	784	73.55
Percentage	15.41	23.58	13.86	2.33	0.78	7.12	63.08		22.80	26.45	12.38	2.53	1.31	8.07	73.55	

[1] Percentage Based on Total Number of Safe Behaviors (N=772)

[2] Percentage Based on Total Number of Unsafe Behaviors (N=1066)

[3] Computed to four decimal places and rounded off to the nearest hundredth

Table 3 (continued)

PHYSICAL CONDITION	Safe Behaviors								Unsafe Behaviors							
	Frequencies								Frequencies							
Subcategories	AARP Drivers	State Examiners	AARP Instructors	Chiefs of Police	Experts	Carrier Drivers	Total	$\chi^{1,3}$	AARP Drivers	State Examiners	AARP Instructors	Chiefs of Police	Experts	Carrier Drivers	Total	$\chi^{2,3}$
Body Size	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0.26	9	1	2	0	0	0	12	1.13
Vision, Hearing and Other Senses	1	0	3	0	0	1	5	0.65	21	15	13	7	2	3	61	5.72
Flexibility and Muscle Strength	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0.26	1	3	0	0	0	0	4	0.38
Reaction Time/ Coordination	1	2	1	1	0	1	6	0.78	0	11	3	0	0	1	15	1.41
Mental Status	19	4	2	1	0	2	28	3.63	15	26	11	3	2	9	66	6.19
Illness and Disability	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	0.39	5	5	2	0	3	0	15	1.41
Alcohol and Drug Use	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.39	1	2	0	3	1	0	7	0.66
Total	25	9	8	2	1	4	49	6.35	52	63	31	13	8	13	180	16.89
Percentage	3.24	1.17	1.04	0.26	0.13	0.52	6.35		4.88	5.91	2.91	1.22	0.75	1.22	16.89	
ATTITUDE																
Awareness of Limits	29	17	8	2	2	10	68	8.81	10	19	7	2	1	1	40	3.75
Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility	17	6	6	5	2	14	50	6.48	16	12	0	2	0	0	30	2.81
Courtesy	55	7	8	2	1	6	79	10.23	3	1	6	0	0	6	16	1.50
Openness to Learning	3	22	0	0	0	0	25	3.34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Regard for Laws and Regulations	1	0	1	0	0	2	4	0.52	10	2	1	0	0	0	13	1.22
Caution	5	2	0	1	0	2	10	1.30	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.28
Total	110	54	23	10	5	34	236	30.57	42	34	14	4	1	7	102	9.57
Percentage	14.25	6.99	2.98	1.30	0.65	4.40	30.57		3.94	3.19	1.31	0.38	0.09	0.66	9.57	

Table 4

Rank by Frequency* by Subcategories of Safe and Unsafe Older Driver Behavior by Six Sample Groups

	AARP Drivers		State Examiners		AARP Instructors		Chiefs of Police		Experts		Carrier Drivers	
RANK	SAFE	UNSAFE	SAFE	UNSAFE	SAFE	UNSAFE	SAFE	UNSAFE	SAFE	UNSAFE	SAFE	UNSAFE
1	Courtesy 55*	Speed 45	General Responsiveness to Environment 38	Lane Behavior 43	Seatbelt Use 22	Lane Behavior 21	Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility 5	Vision, Hearing and Other Senses 7	Safety Sense/ Judgment 3	Left Turns 6	Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility 14	Lane Behavior 18
2	General Responsiveness to Environment 34	Left Turns 31	Openness to Learning 22	Response to Road Signs and Signals 42	Planning Routes 18	Speed 17	Seatbelt Use 5	Lane Behavior 6	Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility 2	Illness and Disability 3	Awareness of Limits 10	Speed 18
3	Awareness of Limits 29	Attention to Driving 24	Lane Behavior 18	Speed 28	General Responsiveness to Environment 13	Vision, Hearing and Other Senses 13	Safety Sense/ Judgment 3	Speed 4	Awareness of Limits 2	Mental Status 2	Condition/ Preparation of Car 9	Knowledge of Rules of Road 10
4	Mental Status 19	Lane Behavior 24	Signaling 18	Mental Status 26	Safety Sense/ Judgment 12	Response to Road Signs and Signals 12	General Responsiveness to Environment 2	Yielding/ Merging 4	Yielding/ Merging 1	Vision, Hearing and Other Senses 2	Speed 8	Mental Status 9
5	Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility 17	Response to Road Signs and Signals 22	Awareness of Limits 17	Left Turns 20	Condition/ Preparation of Car 10	Attention to Driving 11	Courtesy 2	General Responsiveness to Environment 4	Seatbelt Use 1	Awareness of Limits 1	Courtesy 6	Signaling 6
6	Safety Sense/ Judgment 16	Vision, Hearing and Other Senses 21	Speed 17	Knowledge of Rules of Road 19	Awareness of Limits 8	Left Turns 11	Awareness of Limits 2	Mental Status 3	Intersection Behavior 1	Entering Traffic 1	Safety Sense/ Judgment 6	Courtesy 6
7	Seatbelt Use 14	Signaling 19	Knowledge of Operation of Car 15	Backing/ Parking 19	Courtesy 8	Mental Status 11	Control of Car 2	Drug and Alcohol Use 3	Illness and Disability 1	Response to Road Signs and Signals 1	General Responsiveness to Environment 6	Response to Road Signs and Signals 5
8	Yielding/ Merging 13	Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility 16	Seatbelt Use 14	Awareness of Limits 19	Attention to Driving 6	Knowledge of Rules of Road 10	Caution 1	Left Turns 2	Courtesy 1	Speed 1	Signaling 6	Attention to Driving 5
9	Planning Routes 12	Entering Traffic 15	Safety Sense/ Judgment 9	Right Turns 18	Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility 6	Signaling 9	Planning Routes 1	Response to Road Signs and Signals 2		Lane Behavior 1	Attention to Driving 5	Planning Routes 4
10	Condition/ Preparation of Car 5	Mental Status 15	Condition/ Preparation of Car 7	Signaling 18	Signaling 5	Safety Sense/ Judgment 7	Condition/ Preparation of Car 1	Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility 2		Alcohol and Drug Use 1	Lane Behavior 5	General Responsiveness to Environment 4

*Numerals in boxes represent frequency

called in for re-examination. Some descriptions therefore may seem so extreme that they could almost be summarized by, "When they were good they were very very good, and when they were bad they were horrid." Inasmuch as the re-examination was held not at the request of the licensee but by order of the authorities, one might also expect that the examiners would uncover many more unsafe than safe behaviors; and, with the exception of the Attitude category, that turned out to be the case.

The safe behaviors described by the examiners included: yielding the right-of-way, pulling off the road to allow faster drivers to pass, slowing up to allow another driver to get into the proper passing lane or to merge, checking mirrors and fastening seat-belts before starting. The safe drivers seemed to do everything they were supposed to do, and did it "right."

The safe drivers also were aware of their limitations and acted on them--recognition of oncoming fatigue led to safely pulling off the road and resting, or to returning home (if still nearby) to make the trip or take the exam another time. They planned trips to avoid troublesome left turns. When applying for a restricted license, they knew what times they wished to drive and where they would drive to, how they would get there, where they would park, and what traffic conditions were likely to be at the locations. Their concern for safety went beyond themselves--one safe driver checked to be sure the examiner had his seat belt fastened before she would ride with him.

Beginning older women drivers were put among the safe performers. Evidently they overcame their inexperience and age-related impairments through high motivation to get a license, a good attitude about safety, a minimum of bad habits, and a willingness and competence to learn and practice "rules of the road" to the letter. They were not yet "set in their ways," a frequent finding in descriptions of unsafe older drivers.

By and large, the unsafe performance described by examiners confirmed the literature: turning from an improper lane (especially a left turn from the right lane), failing to signal a lane change and drifting from one lane to another, backing up without looking to the rear, attempting to "merge" with freeway traffic from a dead stop.

The licensing examiners submitted a large number of incidents in which older drivers were either unaware of what they had done wrong or unwilling to accept blame for it, even though they were the obvious culprits. When requested to back up, an examinee backed into a stanchion and knocked it over. She said it was not her fault because the examiner just said "back up." He didn't tell her to look behind her. Another examinee backed out of a driveway into a car parked across the street, seriously damaging it. She refused to acknowledge that she had hit the other car, and would not leave any information for the owner.

Another driver committed over 20 violations in the first half of the road test--not stopping at stop signs, turning the wrong way into one-way

street, forcing other cars to jam on brakes, etc.--and would not accept his performance as failing.

Other older drivers apparently had only a partial knowledge of what signs and signals mean. One thought it was OK to go after stopping at a stop sign regardless of other traffic. Another thought that if you signaled correctly before changing lanes it was OK to do so without checking further. Generally they showed a lack of awareness of the difficulties they were causing other drivers and pedestrians; they drove as if they were the "only ones on the road."

One older driver berated the motor vehicle department and the examiner for calling him in for re-examination since he had no accidents for which he was at fault (according to him). He straddled lanes, weaved, drove way below the speed limit, did not stop at stop signs and could not understand why he failed. Yet he seemed honest enough in his denial of any wrongdoing. He said he was a safe driver because he was a slow driver.

Other descriptions from licensing examiners said deteriorating vision in older drivers was responsible for their failing to see cars and pedestrians coming from the side, and for their stopping too close to or too far beyond a stop sign or another car (due to faulty depth perception).

On the upside, there was a hundred-year-old applicant who easily passed all exams, and a woman who requested re-examination, after amputation of part of her leg and replacement with a prosthesis. She wanted to see if she still was a safe driver. She was.

The dilemma of re-examination of older drivers--the high importance--no, the necessity--in their lives of being able to drive vs. their safety and that of others with whom they share the road--was dramatially set forth in one licensing examiner's story. The examinee was angry about being called in. (He had been turned in by his neighbors.) He was 78, used a cane, and was all but deaf. He did everything wrong. But at one point the examiner's hopes rose. The examinee said, "This is a dangerous intersection. You have to be more careful here." Whereupon he quickly "gunned" up to 30 mph, and ran a stop sign through the intersection without looking either way. He could not understand why he failed.

The examiner talked with him a long time about the dangerous things he had done and convinced him to give up his license. The man sold his car and was never again seen outside his home. In two months he died, still at home.

When licenses are validly denied or voluntarily turned in, is it not humane to attempt to substitute transportation alternatives? The investigators think so. The independence maintained through adequate transportation is critical to the mental health and functioning of older people. Those in a position to make decisions about transportation should keep this relationship prominently in mind.

The sensitivity of licensing examiners is especially important, for they can play a vital role in decisions about continuing or removing the license of an older person. They are in effect a court of last resort. Some examiners felt that there were some unsafe older drivers but no older driver problem and said so. They stated that there were unsafe drivers of all ages. These examiners seemed biased in favor of older drivers, and more forgiving and generally uncritical of their behavior. But more examiners expressed views at the other extreme, and revealed a bias against older drivers. Both kinds of examiners probably need training better to understand older drivers and both their age-related limits and capabilities so that deficiencies can be identified and addressed, and, where possible, overcome. Being uncritical can cast the examiner in the role of an "enabler," who through studied inaction overlooks dangerous behavior and permits it to continue. Bias against older drivers can lead to an unfair assessment of their skills, or in an obvious display of an attitude that has them "running scared," or feeling the examination is stacked against them.

In relation to safe older driver behavior, examiners in the "biased against" category wrote that they "had never seen a 'safe' older driver behavior," or "I do not recall ever observing an incident of this nature," or "In the two years that I've been giving road tests, I've only found one older driver that I felt good about," or "Nothing comes to mind," "I've never passed an older driver the first time on the road test," or "They are few and far between," or "In the five years that I have been here I can't think of one that I would go for a joy ride with," or "Older gentlemen usually are wearing hats, which I believe is safe behavior because it warns other drivers of their presence."

One older driver wearing a hat reported that he did so to hide his gray head. He felt that when other drivers came close enough to see his gray head, they seemed to become a bit nervous about what he might do and did whatever they could to get out of his way or leave him behind as soon as possible. He said he knows how they feel, however unjustifiably, for he used to do the same thing when he was younger and found himself on the road with female drivers.

In many an example of unsafe driving, licensing examiners saw some combination of belligerence of attitude and denial of responsibility as important factors. Thus: "She had the attitude that every police officer was picking on her and that there was no way she could be an unsafe driver," and "The applicant repeatedly ran red lights and stop signs, made wide right turns, failed to yield the right of way, and sped over the posted limit, but either made excuses for these actions or disagreed that they occurred at all," and "This older driver blamed everyone except himself for having to take the test."

The examiners also described the importance of the "right" attitude in safe older driver behavior. Some examples are: "The older driver told me he was glad he failed the written test the first time and given the opportunity to take the handbook for study. He stated he had developed the attitude that he knew all there was to know about driving."

"The reason I believe she developed her skills in driving so quickly was that she read and tried to do everything that the driving manual stated as the correct way for safe driving."

"What made this driver different from most called in for examination was his positive attitude toward the police, rules of the road, and other people he shared the roads and streets with. Attitude makes the big difference in most any driving situation."

"This senior driver (age 80) had recognized that over the years the traffic conditions and laws had changed considerably. He took it upon himself to take some driving lessons before his annual test in order to brush up on his driving skills. He wanted to pass and was going to do whatever he could to pass."

"She said, 'If I don't pass today, then I'll study and be back tomorrow.' She listened carefully to instructions and had a great attitude about everything and everyone in general."

Especially troubling to examiners (and to older drivers themselves) were the drivers who acted as if they "knew it all," but who demonstrated unsafe practices and lack of knowledge of rules of the road, and who were never exposed to any type of driver training to unlearn bad habits and learn current rules and regulations.

Descriptions from both of these groups suggest attitude as an all-important variable in safe driving and/or in willingness to learn safer driving. Openness to learning can lead to less defensiveness about declining driving skills, and thus to swifter action toward betterment.

The attitudes discussed above are thought of as the more permanent ones. Transient attitudes can also influence performance for good and bad. While most drivers have a fairly constant attitude about laws and other drivers, attitudes that influence our driving can change from day to day or hour to hour. Older drivers who are happy and relatively unpressured may drive carefully and courteously--allowing other cars into lane, overlooking irritating actions by other drivers, and feeling good about their own selves. On other days things might be quite the opposite. Something is upsetting older drivers and the best relief is to take it out on other drivers. Slower drivers are irritating obstacles to be passed and scowled at. The usually calm and cautious driver becomes anything but. While these varying attitudes apply to all ages, it is especially important that older drivers be aware of the influence of their moods on their actions. Moody younger drivers generally have the ability to recover from mood-generated unwise risk taking on the road. Moody older drivers, with slower corrective responses, can get into trouble.

Older drivers must also monitor the strong influence on their mood swings of drugs taken for conditions associated with aging.

AARP Instructors

The descriptions contributed by AARP instructors were similar in most respects to those of older drivers themselves. The instructors' safe descriptions included knowing and following rules of the road, using seat belts and encouraging (or forcing) passengers to do so. Among the more common unsafe behaviors, they also mentioned failure to understand, or obey, road signs and signals, improper lane and turning behavior, and inattention to driving. Some descriptions emphasized the special carelessness that seems to possess some older persons when they drive close to home.

Among the biggest obstacles to safe driving they described was the attitude of the person who, because he has been driving a long time, thinks he is a good driver, but isn't.

Behind safe behavior the instructors found the following positive attitudes: allowing one's self to become aware of and cope with one's limits rather than deny them; recognition of the need to keep up to date on rules of the road regardless of how long one has been driving; willingness to examine difficult road and driving conditions and to devise ways of coping with them.

Enforcement Officials

Before seeing how descriptions from enforcement officials might differ from those of other groups, some speculation might be valuable about older drivers' perceptions of who is out to "get them." New and pending legislation about special licensing examinations for persons above a specified age, and dramatic media presentations of accidents caused by older drivers, have sensitized them to the possibility of a crusade against them. Older drivers who have stayed informed about proposals for re-examination and have been targeted for increased insurance premiums because of their age, could easily become a bit paranoid about what others are trying to catch them at.

They could become fearful of calling attention to their driving and could cut down on the everyday experience necessary to help keep them proficient. They could cut down out of fear of an accident--their fault or not. They could avoid reporting an accident out of worry about what it would do to their future driving prospects. They could begin to behave as badly as very good basketball players with four personal fouls who play considerably below their level for fear of "fouling out" on the fifth personal. They might feel that their "white heads" were a signal for every patrolman to watch them suspiciously. And by trying so hard to drive more safely, drive less well.

It is instructive in this context that many of the unsafe acts reported by enforcement personnel were not typical violations of rules of the road. On the contrary, they were descriptions of Physical Condition in the subcategories of Vision, Hearing and Other Senses, Mental Status, and Drug and Alcohol Use. To their credit, enforcement personnel seemed to be probing for underlying causes as well as observing the overt behavior. In carrying out their professional responsibilities they have become alerted to the pervasive nature of physiological decline and medications associated with it as factors in driving. Some illustrations:

"75-year-old driver had been suffering fainting spells earlier in the day, and while driving himself and his wife to the doctor, he apparently blacked out and drove into the oncoming lane for some distance."

"Driver had problem staying in his lane, made a quick turn, and his vehicle went into the ditch. Conversation with the gentleman indicated that he had a vision problem with extreme corrective lenses and that he was on medication."

"Weaving, traveling 10-15 mph, ignoring police siren, suspected of drunk driving, turned out to be senile and hard-of-hearing, but quite sober."

"Driving so much under the speed limit on an interstate that he was almost hit from the rear. Driver was in his 80's, and admitted his eyesight was much too poor to drive at an adequate speed at night."

"82-year-old male driver was struck by a 10-car freight train. The investigating officer stated that impaired hearing and defective eyesight contributed to inattention and caused an unsafe condition."

"The major problem in this severe accident was the poor vision that did not permit her to make a sound judgment about how fast other cars were moving."

"He'd forgotten he was on medication, and was alternatively driving on center line and in opposing traffic lane, weaving, drifting across left lane and across four lanes. The medication made him drowsy and his behavior made him appear tipsy."

These and other descriptions prepared by enforcement personnel reinforce the investigators' conviction (made elsewhere in the report)--that some of the most bizarre older driver behaviors can be linked to physical conditions and the effects of the medications taken to deal with them.

Of the groups contributing critical incidents, enforcement personel, more than any of the others, mentioned medications as a factor in their descriptions of unsafe driving behavior. This may have been due to close scrutiny of unsafe older drivers about whom they read or wrote detailed arrest reports. Studies indicate that older people, when compared with

younger people, are more sensitive to adverse reactions from drugs. Also, medications or combinations of them can have unpredictable side effects which are influenced by daily food intake, fatigue, mood, and general state of wellness. Considering that people over 65 are the greatest consumers of prescription and non-prescription drugs, due to the chronic illnesses they suffer (e.g., arthritis, heart disease, diabetes, etc.), the frequent critical behavior descriptions which used such words as "being unaware," "appeared not to see," "was oblivious to," "was in his own world," "appeared to be out of it," may be partially or fully due to the medication being taken. Stressing awareness of the influence of medication on one's mental alertness for driving should be an important goal of older driver education.

Experts

Descriptions collected from experts were too few for comparison with those of the other groups. The wide distribution of their selections supports the investigators' contention that older driver behavior is not going to be dramatically affected by special attention to one or two areas about which experts will agree.

Carrier Drivers

The carrier drivers participating in this study drove all sizes of trucks and rigs in rural, suburban, and urban areas throughout the United States. What the investigators sensed most from their descriptions was an understanding of older drivers and, at times, an empathy with them. The safe behaviors included courtesy, and steady, responsible, predictable practices--stopping at rest stops, cleaning windshields and tail lights, no tailgating, horn blowing, gesturing, or risky passing and pulling in too soon when the truck driver was necessarily going slowly in a no-passing situation. The patience, maturity, and experience of older drivers was also praised. One sensed an identification by the truck driver with the older driver who, without meaning to, prevented following drivers from passing. Another praiseworthy behavior was pulling off the road where safe to let faster traffic go by, a behavior also practiced by the more courteous truck drivers.

The unsafe behaviors included cutting in and out of lanes, frequently without signaling, passing and then slowing down, passing for too long a distance at too slow a speed before returning to the lane. Occasionlly, there was a generalized complaint about driving "as if with blinders. Because if it's not in front of them, they don't see it." But all in all, the truck drivers felt there were more safe than unsafe older drivers on the highway.

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APPENDIX A

Data Collection Form

Dear Study Participant:

Projections are that older Americans will continue to drive their automobiles to satisfy their transportation needs. Furthermore, population trends show that the proportion of older drivers will continue to increase so that by the year 2000 they will represent 28% of the driving population--39% by the year 2050.

Mobility--being able to get around--is an important factor in the independence and good mental health of older adults. Almost everyone seriously concerned with traffic safety wants to keep older drivers on the highways as long as they can drive safely, and not mistake age as the sole indicator of driving ability. But defining "safe" and "unsafe" behavior can be complicated. Consequently, we are conducting a study to determine what experts in relevant fields consider indicative of "safe" and "unsafe" driving by older adults (55 years of age and over), and we are asking you to participate as one of the experts.

What is urgently needed are descriptions of incidents in which you feel that the actions of the older motorist illustrate your ideas of safe and unsafe driver behavior. Ultimately, on the basis of an analysis of these incidents, we hope to construct a practical self-assessment scale, which the older driver can use to evaluate his own driving performance. The scale will be self-scoring and tied to actions the driver can take to remain safe for himself and others as long as possible. The scale will also alert the driver to when he or she should think of relinquishing the driving privilege out of concern for the safety of all who use the highways.

The incidents you contribute will be very valuable for the successful completion of this study. Please follow carefully the instructions listed on the attached sheet.

Thank you for your help in this most important effort.

INSTRUCTION SHEET

Instructions

1. Please describe at least two incidents, one of which illustrates what you regard as safe behavior and one which illustrates unsafe behavior on the part of older (55 years of age and older) drivers. Do not use general statements such as, "The older driver was courteous and obeyed all traffic laws."
2. In general, choose incidents which occurred during the last six months. You may, however, describe an incident which remains vividly clear even though it occurred more than six months ago.
3. Choose incidents in which you participated or which you observed.
4. Be as specific as possible in your descriptions. Include important details of the incident, such as the road, weather and traffic conditions (where they apply), and the sex and approximate age of the driver. (See examples on the following page.)
5. Use Sheet 1 (attached) for describing the "safe" incident and Sheet 2 (attached) for the "unsafe" incident. If you need more room for your descriptions, or if you describe more than two incidents, use the reverse sides of Sheets 1 and 2, or add other sheets as necessary. Please return the sheets in the enclosed envelope, addressed and stamped for your convenience.

Examples

Critical incident of "safe" older driver behavior

On a clear Sunday morning, a volunteer driver about 70 years of age was taking five senior citizens to church. Two of the scheduled passengers refused his request to fasten their seatbelts. Taking about five minutes, he described the value of seatbelts in reducing the consequences of an accident (should it occur) by explaining the "second collision," the body against the interior of the vehicle, highlighting the likely injuries. He also addressed the reasons for the two refusals and explained that they were in conflict with the facts. He also pointed out the slower recovery from injury of older persons. Consequently, one of the refusers fastened his belt, but the other did not. The driver ordered the latter from the car, and proceeded to the church service with his fastened passengers. I believe the driver's action reinforced the value of fastening a safety belt, and made clear that it was an area in which he would accept no compromise with safety.

Critical incident of "unsafe" older driver behavior

During a clear weekday afternoon, I was driving on a long stretch of two-lane (one in each direction) road in the suburbs posted for 30 mph. The traffic was somewhat dense in both directions. The car ahead of me was being driven by a man about 70, going approximately 20 mph. He had a woman front-seat passenger about his own age. His car was positioned toward the median dividing stripe, making it especially difficult to pass, and he was applying his brakes frequently, apparently in response to traffic situations that were way out ahead. Meanwhile, cars were piling up behind me. I felt that this driver was creating an unsafe situation because the drivers behind me were unable to pass and were increasingly "nosing" out into the opposing lanes, apparently trying to observe what was tying things up and/or looking for the chance to pass.

SHEET 1

Description of Critical Incident of "Safe" Older Driver Behavior

SHEET 2

Description of Critical Incident of "Unsafe" Older Driver Behavior

APPENDIX B

Adapted Sample Group Face Sheets

Dear Licensing Examiner:

Projections are that older Americans will continue to drive their automobiles to satisfy their transportation needs. Furthermore, population trends show that the proportion of older drivers will continue to increase so that by the year 2000 they will represent 28% of the driving population--39% by the year 2050.

As you know, mobility--being able to get around--is an important factor in the independence and good mental health of older adults. Most everyone seriously concerned with traffic safety wants to keep older drivers on the highways as long as they can drive safely, and not mistake age as the sole indicator of driving ability. But defining "safe" and "unsafe" behavior can be complicated. Consequently, we are conducting a study to determine what experts in relevant fields consider indicative of "safe" and "unsafe" driving by older adults (55 years of age and over), and we are asking you to participate as a licensing examiner.

What is urgently needed are descriptions of incidents in which you feel that the actions of the older motorist illustrate your ideas of safe and unsafe driver behavior. You may wish to describe incidents that actually occurred when you were testing older drivers. On the other hand, you may describe incidents from any setting. Ultimately, on the basis of an analysis of these incidents, we hope to construct older driver curriculum materials and other safety products, perhaps including a prototype of a road test suitable for older drivers.

The descriptions you contribute will be very valuable for the successful completion of this study. Due recognition will be given to you and your organization for your cooperation. Please follow carefully the instructions listed on the attached sheet.

Thank you for your help in this most important effort.

Dear 55 Alive/Mature Driving Program Instructor:

Projections are that older Americans will continue to drive their automobiles to satisfy their transportation needs. Furthermore, population trends show that the proportion of older drivers will continue to increase so that by the year 2000 they will represent 28% of the driving population--39% by the year 2050.

Mobility--being able to get around--is an important factor in the independence and good mental health of older adults. Most everyone seriously concerned with traffic safety wants to keep older drivers on the highways as long as they can drive safely, and not mistake age as the sole indicator of driving ability. But defining "safe" and "unsafe" behavior can be complicated. Consequently, we are conducting a study to determine what experts in relevant fields consider indicative of "safe" and "unsafe" driving by older adults (55 years of age and over), and we are asking you to participate as a driver retraining authority.

What is urgently needed are descriptions of incidents in which you feel that the actions of the older motorist illustrate your ideas of safe and unsafe driver behavior. Ultimately, based on an analysis of these incidents, we hope to develop older driver retraining curriculum materials and other safety products.

The incidents you contribute will be very valuable for the successful completion of this study. Due recognition will be given to the AARP and the 55 Alive/Mature Driving Program for their cooperation. Please follow carefully the instructions listed on the attached sheet.

Thank you for your help in this most important effort.

Dear Participating Officer:

Projections are that older Americans will continue to drive their automobiles to satisfy their transportation needs. Furthermore, population trends show that the proportion of older drivers will continue to increase so that by the year 2000 they will represent 28% of the driving population--39% by the year 2050.

Mobility--being able to get around--is an important factor in the independence and good mental health of older adults. Most everyone seriously concerned with traffic safety wants to keep older drivers on the highways as long as they can drive safely, and not mistake age as the sole indicator of driving ability. But defining "safe" and "unsafe" behavior can be complicated. Consequently, we are conducting a study to determine what experts in relevant fields consider indicative of "safe" and "unsafe" driving by older adults (55 years of age and over), and we are asking you to participate as an enforcement authority.

What is urgently needed are descriptions of incidents in which you feel that the actions of the older motorist illustrate your ideas of safe and unsafe driver behavior. Ultimately, based on an analysis of these incidents, we hope to construct a practical self-assessment scale, older driver retraining curriculum materials, and other safety products. The scale can be used by older drivers to evaluate their own driving performance. The scale will be self-scoring and tied to actions they can take to remain safe for themself and others as long as possible. The scale will also alert the driver to when he or she should think of relinquishing the driving privilege out of concern for the safety of all who use the highways.

The incidents you contribute will be very valuable for the successful completion of this study. Due recognition will be given to the International Association of Chiefs of Police for their cooperation. Please follow carefully the instructions listed on the attached sheet.

Thank you for your help in this most important effort.

To National Carrier Drivers:

Projections are that older Americans will continue to drive their automobiles to satisfy their transportation needs. Furthermore, population trends show that the proportion of older drivers will continue to increase so that by the year 2000 they will represent 28% of the driving population--39% by the year 2050.

Mobility--being able to get around--is an important factor in the independence and good mental health of older adults. Most everyone seriously concerned with traffic safety wants to keep older drivers on the highways as long as they can drive safely, and not mistake age as the sole indicator of driving ability. But defining "safe" and "unsafe" behavior can be complicated. Consequently, we are conducting a study to determine what experts in relevant fields consider indicative of "safe" and "unsafe" driving by older adults (55 years of age and over), and we are asking you to participate as a driver.

What is urgently needed are descriptions of incidents in which you feel that the actions of the older motorist illustrate your ideas of safe and unsafe driver behavior. Ultimately, based on an analysis of these incidents, we hope to develop a practical self-assessment scale, older driver retraining curriculum materials, and other safety products.

The incidents you contribute will be very valuable for the successful completion of this study. Please follow carefully the instructions listed on the attached sheet.

Thank you for your help in this most important effort.

APPENDIX C

Instructions for Test of Interjudge Reliability for Prime Categories and Sub-Categories of Older Driver Critical Incidents

1. Enclosed are 80 Critical Incident papers with descriptions of "safe" and "unsafe" behaviors of older drivers. The critical behaviors are numbered and underlined, and, as you will note, some descriptions contain more than one underlined critical behavior.

2. Also enclosed is an inductively derived list of three prime categories (Driving Habits, Driver's Physical Condition, and Driver's Attitude), respectively designated by the letters A, B, and C. Under each prime category, there are subcategories (15 under Driving Habits, five under Driver's Physical Condition, and four under Driver's Attitude).

3. Please place alongside each of the underlined critical behaviors in the 80 descriptions, the capital letter and numeral you believe best describes the category to which the behavior should be assigned, regardless of whether it is "safe" or "unsafe." For this task, use colored markings in the left margin, when possible.

4. At a future point, there will be further subdivisions under the subcategories, but interjudge reliability will not be required for this step.

5. If you believe the categories are not clear, or if you think additional categories are necessary, please write these suggestions directly on the list and make your assignments accordingly.

Thank you.

LIST OF PRIME CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES

A. Driving Habits

1. Responsiveness to Driving Environment
2. Stopping
3. Turning
4. Attention to Driving
5. Planning Routes
6. Passing
7. Entering Traffic
8. Speed
9. Signaling
10. Condition/Preparation of Car
11. Safety Sense/Judgment
12. Lane Behavior
13. Seatbelt Use
14. Signs and Signals
15. Backing

B. DRIVER'S PHYSICAL CONDITION

1. Size
2. Vision
3. Reaction Time
4. Mental Control
5. Illness

C. DRIVER'S ATTITUDE

1. Self-Awareness of Limits
2. Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility
3. Patience
4. Courteousness

APPENDIX D

Descriptions of Safe and Unsafe Performance of Older Drivers

The descriptions in this appendix were selected from over 1000 collected in the study. In most cases, they are presented in the words in which they were received, or with minor editorial changes to improve clarity. The descriptions can be used as case studies in older-driver improvement programs, where the instructor can explore with students the unsafe behaviors and their probable causes, and perhaps use some of the safe behaviors as a guide to correction. The descriptions can also be helpful in other ways, such as in media presentations of the "do's" and "don'ts" of older-driver behavior, and in driver education classes where younger drivers can be made more aware of the behavior patterns of the older drivers with whom they will be sharing the road.

The descriptions have been organized into three major categories: Driving Practices, Physical Condition, and Attitude. Nevertheless, some of the descriptions will overlap categories, and, in some cases, could with some justification go into any one of the three above. Or the descriptions might contain numerous critical behaviors that were, in fact, assigned to more than one of the three major categories and the 35 subcategories constituting them. Categorizing driving actions in mutually exclusive ways is difficult if not impossible because driving is a complicated task necessarily integrating many coordinated behaviors. The investigators have used their best judgment in each case, choosing the category that seemed to fit the major intent of the writer of the description and to hold the most value for the purposes of the study.

DRIVING PRACTICES

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Knowledge of Operation of Car	1. A vehicle approached the traffic check with an elderly lady of about 75 driving. She was asked to dim her headlights but had no idea how to do so. Her excuse was that she never drives at night. The elderly lady was shown how to dim her lights. The dimmer switch is in the turn signal and not on the floor. It is not uncommon to show two or three older people how to dim their headlights at a traffic check. Drivers should be more familiar with their vehicles.	1. I was a passenger with a woman well into her 70's, who had just purchased a large Buick sedan. She said that before she took the car out on the road she made sure the dealer showed her how everything worked--lights, windshield wipers, emergency flashers. She was using her seatbelt, and had both hands in the "10 and 2" position on the steering wheel.
	2. One evening around midnight, while traveling north on an interstate, I came up behind a motor home. I observed the driver riding the white line on the left of the unit. While rounding a curve, he would cut the curve short. He could have hit anyone beside him. He was also below the highway speed limit going up hills. This caused people to back up behind him. When I finally passed him, I noticed the driver was a male in his sixties, probably retired. Apparently he had bought a motor home to travel, but was not used to the size or weight of the vehicle. He needed training on how to keep the vehicle in the center of his lane and to get extra speed for going up hills.	2. On a mountain two-lane road, a man about 65 years old was driving a recreational vehicle (RV) and evidently was not able to drive at the speed limit. However, he took advantage of downhill grades to pick up speed for going uphill. He kept his RV centered in his lane. Nevertheless, traffic was backing up behind him. But every chance he had he would pull off the road and let the backed-up traffic proceed. In these cases, he positioned his RV with plenty of clearance and in a position to see when it was clear to pull back onto the highway.

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Condition/ Preparation of Car	1. On a cold, snowing, winter weekday morning, a motorist, about 55 years of age, brushed the snow from his windshield. Upon entering his auto, the dampness of his clothing and the warmth of his breath caused the inner windshield to frost up. He scraped a small section of frost from the inside of the windshield and drove into traffic with his vision obstructed.	1. It was a snowy Friday afternoon, and when 68-year-old Bill started back home after shopping, about two inches of snow had already accumulated and the road surface still had patches of ice from last week's storm. Bill first cleaned all window surfaces, head and tail lights, and then checked to be sure the wiper fluid was sufficient.
	2. On a clear Saturday afternoon on a curving mountain road I saw an older driver pulling a trailer. As he was coming up a grade, the trailer came loose from his pickup and stopped in the middle of the road. I then stopped to help him secure his trailer to his pickup and asked why he had not used the safety chains when he first hooked up to the trailer. His answer was he never used them and that it was too much trouble.	2. While vacationing this past summer, I watched a gentleman in his mid-sixties at a rest area. He checked his tires, lights, oil, wipers, and signal lights, while he was stopped. He was very methodical in checking these things to ascertain if everything was in operational order. He did not overlook any detail.
Knowledge of Rules of Road	1. This incident happened on a section of interstate highway in a large city. The weather was clear and traffic was moderate. A woman, about 65-70 years old, missed her exit from the expressway. She pulled over and stopped, then backed up in the right lane of the expressway until she could go down the exit ramp.	1. While traveling on the interstate on a clear day, a driver missed the exit and pulled this car off the road about 50 yards past the exit. After getting his bearings and checking his road map, he pulled back on the interstate again and proceeded to the next exit.
	2. During a testing, an 87-year-old man ran a stop sign. He explained that he does not stop	2. As we started the driving test on a 62-year-old widow, I noticed that she was very careful to adjust both the

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Knowledge of Rules of Road (continued)	for that sign because there was never any traffic at that intersection. 3. A car pulled up to a four-way stop intersection. He pulled out after the car in front of him pulled out. He did not wait his turn, even though there were cars stopped at each of the other intersections. 4. I was approaching a four-way intersection with blinking lights. The road was wet with melting snow, which made it a little slippery. Coming toward me was a pickup truck traveling a little too fast in view of the road conditions, and the fact that he was approaching an intersection. He did not slow down at a yellow blinking light. A car on his right came up to the intersection with a red blinking light and made a right turn into the path of the truck. The truck was unable to stop in time to prevent the accident. The driver of the car was an elderly lady about 65-70 with a passenger about the same age. She failed to yield the right of way to the oncoming truck. She also failed to stop at the blinking red light before making her turn. The truck hit the car in the rear section and spun it around.	outside and inside rear view mirror so she could have a clear view to the rear. She also adjusted the front seat so she could be comfortable and have control over the accelerator and brake pedal. At the parallel parking, she was careful to signal when she pulled from the parking area. She gave signals on her lane changes and checked for traffic before changing lanes. She was careful on her unmarked intersections and checked for traffic. She made her turning movements properly and was careful to stay on her side of the road. She concentrated completely on her driving and the traffic around her. She was cautious, but not so much as to impede other traffic. I was impressed with her driving and told her so. The reason she developed her skills in driving so quickly was, I believe, that she read and tried to do everything that the driving manual stated as the correct way for safe driving. She had had no prior driving experiences, and it is much easier to learn skills correctly, than to relearn incorrect procedures. It has been my experience in giving driving examinations to older people who have been driving all their adult lives, that many of them have developed bad driving habits. Such bad habits are hard to change.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Planning Routes	1. In this area, we experience a yearly immigration of people from colder climates, and during this time traffic is more congested than normal. Many of the drivers are elderly and are unfamiliar with the local traffic laws or the layout of the area when looking for an address. On one occasion I observed a person, approximately 70-75 years of age, driving in the far right-hand lane searching for an address. There was a passenger in the front seat with him and they were conversing back and forth. The farther he drove, the more agitated and confused he became, almost to the point of being disoriented, because of his failure to find the address. Suddenly without warning or proper signal, he cut across two lanes of traffic to get to the left-turn lane, forcing other drivers to react quickly. If they had not been able to take quick action, there would have been a serious accident.	1. One day during the holidays, I stopped to have coffee and donuts. A gentleman in his late seventies was looking at a road map and appeared to be having trouble. Being a native of the area, I asked if I could help. He stated the traffic on the expressway was so heavy and fast that it made him nervous and he was trying to select an alternate route and would appreciate my assistance. We were able to select him a safe route with less speed and traffic.
	2. A lady stopped, without warning, in the middle of an intersection because she had made an error and didn't want to turn. She was obviously lost, and didn't know where she wanted to go, or hadn't planned where she was going.	2. An older female driver leaving a shopping center stopped to consider her best way to enter into the traffic. The outlet from the shopping center was on the west side. Since traffic was moderately heavy, she decided to make a right-hand turn north and travel three blocks where she could again turn right and go east a few blocks. At a light signal there, she could turn south to her destination safely.
	3. While I was driving west on a very heavily traveled road in a retirement community of about 55,000 people, a man about 70 years old, driving east, suddenly	3. When she leaves home to go shopping, a 70-year-old neighbor of mine drives several extra blocks in a less direct route. This requires her to make two controlled left turns in order to avoid crossing three lanes of fast-moving traffic on a thoroughfare.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Planning Routes (continued)	made a swerving left turn in front of me. He wanted to turn into a shopping mall parking area. Unfortunately, he had traveled too far to the east before making his turn. He missed the regular ramp into the parking area and hit the curb. He continued going over the curb very slowly. This caused the traffic in the right two lanes to almost hit him. I know the man for he lives near me. He could have reached the shopping mall by back roads or by taking all right turns without having to cross traffic.	4. Many times when I find it difficult to make a left turn, or think it is dangerous, I will take the extra time and make three right turns which I think are safer for me. 5. I notice that older drivers tend to stay out of rush hour traffic and use streets other than those carrying the heavier, higher speed traffic. Most of the persons of my group plan their trips so that they complete them in an organized manner. This avoids retracing the route and reduces left turns as much as possible. They also schedule their trips for off hours as much as possible.
Seatbelt Use	1. My next door neighbor was killed because of his unsafe behavior. He was driving his car without his proper sunglasses, which he had forgotten. He then was blinded by the sun, went through a red light, and hit an oncoming car. He was thrown out of the vehicle because he had also forgotten to attach his seatbelt. 2. My neighbor has her two grandchildren vist her occasionally. She puts them in her car, along with the dog. Then the children fight to see who sits with grandma. They climb back and forth over the front seat while she drives. No car	1. A colleague of mine (about 60) on at least one occasion was glad that she had formed the "seatbelt habit." While cruising down an interstate at the posted speed limit, a front tire of her vehicle blew out. Later she related that there was no way she could have remained behind the steering wheel without the restraining influence of the safety belt. 2. Since many of my older friends no longer drive, I find that almost every place I go, I have from one to three passengers. I always ask them to put on the seatbelts and most of them, also being

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Seatbelt Use (continued)	seats or seatbelts are in use. The dog jumps back and forth along with the children. Yes, the grandmother uses her seatbelt, but that's no protection for the children or the dog.	safety conscious, are happy to do so. However, I have one lady who always objects. She says, "Oh, I don't want to fool with that thing. I trust you." I explained to her that trust has nothing to do with it. If someone should hit us or if I should have to stop suddenly, her head would slam into the windshield. Finally one day, I had to tell her that I would not move the car until she put on the belt. She knew I meant it and she complied. Since then she has put on the belt. 3. A neighbor, whom I judge to be about 65, always buckles his seatbelt when he gets into his car even if going a short distance. He also keeps a car seat, which he insists his young grandchildren use whenever they visit.
Entering Traffic	1. The day was clear and the traffic moderately heavy on the four-lane, 35 mph city street. An elderly man, alone in his heavy old car, pulled out from a side street without stopping and proceeded across the four lanes at about 20 mph or thereabouts. Alert drivers on the through street braked and maneuvered around him as he continued on his way, apparently unaware of the hazard he had created.	1. On a clear weekday morning, a 76-year-old man was about to enter a main higway from a side road. He stopped behind one car already at the STOP sign, and looked to his left and right to scan the road scene on the highway. Observing the car ahead beginning to move, he proceeded on a bit, again scanning the road. He suddenly had to brake as the moving car ahead slammed to a halt in a speeding car

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Entering Traffic (continued)	2. A lady in her late 70's pulled out of a side street, onto a busy thoroughfare of three lanes in both directions and a 45-mile speed limit. She pulled out very slowly, taking a lane and a half, and continued at approximately 15 mph for a half block before she got into the curb lane. She then proceeded at about 30 mph.	"near miss" for us and the car ahead. The older man was alert to the quick changes that can occur when trying to get on a main highway.
	3. In the morning rush hour, traffic on a three-lane divided highway was moving at a speed of 45 to 50 mph. Looking ahead, I could see a car waiting to pull out of a side street on the right. Suddenly, the car pulled out fast into the right lane and immediately slowed down. Brakes screeched and cars skidded around, but fortunately there were no collisions. As I caught up to the car that had pulled out, an elderly gentleman was driving at 20-25 mph, completely oblivious of any other cars or any wrongdoing.	2. I am 71 years old. I was trying to come out from a side street, intending to make a left turn into a main street. There were two cars behind me. Traffic was heavy on the main street; an approaching car signaled for a right turn into the side street. I hesitated, not trusting the signal. The driver behind me honked his horn. The hesitation saved a collision, as the main street driver continued on his way, still blinking his right-turn signal.
	4. While driving north, an elderly woman with a handicap license plate pulled out of the shopping center right across the lane of traffic on her left and onto the center lane without any directional signals. She seemed unaware of any oncoming traffic.	3. A 77-year-old driver, attempting to enter a busy street (2 lanes each direction) to go left, noted much traffic and elected to turn right, go around the block, and come out at a traffic light for a safer left turn into the busy street.
	5. In the middle of the afternoon, on a clear day, a	4. Two lanes approaching driveway leading to shopping center. I noticed a car attempting to leave and decided to let the car into my lane after checking traffic around me to be sure I, in turn, didn't create a traffic

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Entering Traffic (continued)	woman approximately 70 years of age drove out of a shopping mall across three lanes of traffic onto the highway. This highway was the main street in town. She did not look either way and did not slow up--just drove out and made a left turn on the far side of the highway.	hazard. I then slowed down to let the car into my traffic lane.
	6. Last April as I was pulling my 19-foot trailer north, a car driven by an elderly man was about to pull onto an interstate from an access road. I was moving slightly faster than he was and would have collided with him if I had not applied my brakes to allow him to get on the interstate. He didn't even look to his left to see whether he had sufficient clearance to get there. This happens often, and a trailer or semi-truck requires more braking distance than a car.	5. On a clear weekday afternoon, I saw a man of about 80 come out of a bank and get into his car. He sat for a moment positioning himself in the seat and fastening his seatbelt. I also observed that he checked his mirrors, etc. He started his car, put on his left-turn indicator, and looking carefully, pulled smoothly into traffic when an adequate opening appeared.
	7. On a sunny weekday afternoon, I was driving along a stretch of interstate highway with a posted speed limit of 55 mph, when I saw a car on the shoulder ahead. As I approached this car, which was now approximately one-quarter mile away, I changed lanes just in case the driver decided to pull out into the lane of traffic. To my amazement, just as I came abreast of the car, the driver, a woman who looked to be about 78 years old, pulled out into the right lane without trying to gain any speed so as to merge	6. Older driver slowed down about 120 feet from signaled intersection to let driver leaving filling station lot enter traffic lane. The light had just turned yellow. The driver who slowed to let the other one in was probably 70. He was right in front of me. No time was lost by anyone as we had to stop for the light. 7. Mrs. H, age 67, was moving slowly in a long line of traffic toward an intersection. Traffic was so heavy the light had changed several times and cars were bumper-to-bumper. A young man in a truck was trying to exit a parking lot into the line of traffic. None of the drivers would let him in and consequently he kept edging out of the lot, trying

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Entering Traffic (continued)	more safely into the lane. As I completed my lane change, glancing in my mirrors, I saw several cars dodging in an attempt to miss her slower car.	to force his truck into line. When Mrs. H was in a position to do so, she stopped and let him get into traffic safely. He waved "thank you."
	8. It was a clear day. There was quite a bit of traffic ahead of me. I was traveling at a reasonable speed--the same as traffic ahead of me. Looking into my rear view mirror, I could see no one behind. Everything was going nicely. I was keeping a respectable distance from the traffic in front when all of a sudden from a side street, an auto pulled in front of me. Good thing no other driver was behind me as I slammed on my brakes. Why didn't he wait two more minutes until the road was clear? This was a man who should have known better as he is retired--and in a hurry to go where?	Although I live on the corner of a cul-de-sac with very light traffic, I slow to a crawl before entering the street because of young children who are permitted to play in the street. They are not all as high as shrubbery. Nor do I raise the electric garage door until I have a full view of the driveway to make sure there are no children. The garage door opens out.
Signaling	1. Approaching an intersection into which I planned to turn left, I was in the right lane of a three-lane street about a block from the intersection. I began to change lanes into the left to get in position for my left turn. I forgot to turn on my turn signal and began to force my way across two lanes of traffic. In the process, several oncoming cars had to brake to avoid hitting me as I entered their lane.	1. We followed an older woman, who in the course of about one mile had the need to change lanes about three times. In every case, she put on her signal, but did not change lanes until a count of about four or five had passed. It was so noticeable that even my wife, who does not drive, mentioned it. Most drivers begin to change lanes as soon as they put on their signals, if they signal at all.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Signaling (continued)	2. It was mid-morning on a sunny weekday. I was about to exit from a grocery story/ drugstore/small store plaza with two "in/out" exits just before the corner intersection. A woman driver, probably in her late 60's, had turned on her right-turn signal before the second entrance from the corner intersection, indicating her intent to turn into the plaza. Failing to turn, she also passed the first exit, where I was waiting to enter the traffic on the right. Had I believed she would turn in, I would have begun my turn, and she surely would have hit me. Her signal, as it happened, was meant for the corner where she finally turned right. A premature signal on a street, where so many places of business have entrances, puts many exiting people in jeopardy. My observation was that she was not fully aware of the consequences of poor timing in indicating her intent.	2. A male relative in his mid-seventies picked us up at the hotel to take us for a tour of the area and to his house for lunch. The weather was good but the traffic heavy. He moved smoothly but safely through heavy traffic by making eye contact and signaling by hand to give right of way to other drivers.
	3. The other day while driving down a main road, I came up behind a vehicle with the right-turn signal flashing. I stayed a couple of car lengths behind and thought the vehicle was going to turn at the next intersection, but to my surprise it traveled two blocks farther before turning. The driver looked like a woman in her 70's.	3. One afternoon a couple of summers ago, an elderly man was driving along Highway #1. It was hazy-cloudy on the highway when he started to use his turn signal to turn. Because of the weather, he also used his hand to signal his intentions.
		4. On an open roadway in normal traffic with good weather conditions, an elderly driver seemed to be alert as to what the traffic ahead was doing, and he was adjusting to it. He not only stayed at the lawful following distance, but also signalled any move that he was about to make.
		5. A safe older driver at a four-way stop, when both cars arrive at the same time, makes a sign for the other car to proceed.

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Signaling (continued)	4. An elderly man was holding up traffic in the fast lane. In going into the slow lane without signaling, he hit the car alongside him. It was fortunate that no one was hurt.	6. On a clear, sunny, dry, afternoon, two boys on bicycles approached a cross-walk, paying little if any attention to traffic on the six-lane, left-turn-lane street ahead. The older driver in front of me could see the boys about 400 ft. ahead. He applied his brakes slightly to warn following cars and then gave a hand signal and slowed down quite a bit. Sure enough, the boys rode off the sidewalk into the outside lane and the older driver and following drivers had ample time to stop or slow and avoid hitting the boys.
	5. A friend of my sister's, who was driving north, and who up until this time had never had an accident in all her 81 years, almost had one last month. She was in the left lane when all of a sudden she remembered she wanted to turn right and she turned without signaling. The car coming south also turned left and they almost hit. This is a four-way stop and my friend was really "shaken" that she was so careless. I think there was conversation going on in the car.	7. A senior citizen (about 60) had parked a camper trailer with a flat tire over the crest of a hill. Just before the crest, he had placed a warning triangle about 300 yards on the right-hand edge of the road to warn oncoming motorists that there was danger ahead over the hill. He had pulled the trailer off the road as much as possible and was changing the tire.
	6. On a clear sunny afternoon in moderately heavy traffic, I followed a car driven by an older man who stayed in the left lane for 34 blocks with his right-turn signal flashing. Following cars were getting impatient and were trying to cut into the right lane, often when hardly safe to do so. In addition, his brake lights kept coming on even though the cars in front were some distance ahead and no braking was necessary. Ultimately, he stopped at a light prior to turning left--at which point, he finally signalled left.	8. As I went around a sharp curve, I noticed a bad accident ahead and quickly put on flasher lights, cautioning several cars behind me. This may have prevented a crash into the bad accident up ahead.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Response to Road Signs and Signals	1. Recently, my mother-in-law and father-in-law were in town for a visit, and my father-in-law and I decided to go to a department store. He wanted to drive, so I was to give directions. It was about 6:30-7:00 pm and we were driving along a four-lane road when to my surprise he drove right through an intersection with a four-way stop. The signs were there and lucky for us the intersection was empty. I didn't say anything to him (he's 68), but I felt he was just unfamiliar with the area or just not paying attention. From that point on, I took no chances. I would tell him "at this stop sign" do such and such, to make him aware of them.	1. As I was approaching an intersection, I noticed a car stopped at a stop sign approximately 71 yards away, waiting for me to cross. As I passed, I noticed a man about 60 years old behind the wheel. I felt this man could have cleared through the intersection before I came into it, but he was being extra cautious or safe in waiting for me to get through the intersection before he proceeded.
	2. I had a cold and had not been out driving but was on my way to the grocery store along a street I had driven many years. Meantime, they had put up a four-way stop, and I breezed thru, not paying attention. A woman stopped at the stop sign, blew her horn loud and long, bringing to my attention the fact that I was wrong. Guilty of not having my mind on my driving.	2. I watched a man and wife as they left a parking lot. They were both in their middle 80's. They adjusted their seatbelts, the mirrors, and looking carefully around them, started off. They stopped at the stop sign and looked both ways before entering the street. She helped him, looking for possible traffic hazards, and pointing out signs and conditions he may not have seen.
	3. On a cold but clear day, a 70-year-old man was driving within two blocks of his business. He was tossed 40 feet from his car when it collided with a highway patrol vehicle. After failing to halt at a stop sign, he had driven his car into the	3. An older driver (A) was driving east. He wanted to turn left into a retirement community. He activated his left-turn signal, entered the left-turn lane and stopped, waiting for the red light to change. Another older driver (B), traveling west, had his right-turn signal on as he came to the intersection. When the light turned green, he drove straight ahead, even

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Responses to Road Signs and Signals (continued)	state highway patrol officer's car. Both cars were damaged extensively and both men were injured. According to the police report, the elderly driver was not wearing a seatbelt. Sometimes we are most careless when driving in territory with which we are most familiar.	though his right-turn signal was on. Driver A did not budge when the light turned green. He waited to see if B would turn as indicated by his signal or whether he would go straight ahead, which he did. Because A was cautious, an accident was averted.
	4. I was waiting at a stoplight to a main thoroughfare in one of our larger cities. It was my misfortune that the driver of a vehicle on the thoroughfare, trying to "beat the light," made a left turn in front of oncoming traffic, glanced off a traffic island at the intersection, and sideswiped my car. The driver of the offending car was most unlikely--a retired 89-year-old minister. Needless to say, he was devastated and completely confused by the incident. We were very fortunate that there were no injuries.	4. Within the last six months, we rode with another couple to Las Vegas, Nevada. The weather was perfect and the roads were in good shape. The male driver, 72 years old, drove in accordance with the speed limit posted and paid attention to all signs. There were many places of open road where he could have accelerated to 65-70 mph but he kept within the speed limits. His explanation was that he takes no chances of getting a ticket and losing his license, and besides he doesn't feel comfortable driving too fast.
	5. I was an eyewitness to the accident. I had just finished breakfast at a restaurant across from my motel and was at the cashier's desk paying the bill when I glanced out the window and saw a collision between a late model automobile and a large cargo truck. It was a loud crash and one that sent pieces of metal from both vehicles floating in the air. A farmer was the driver of the truck which had struck the passenger car with two elderly women as occupants. The scene of the accident was at a	5. When the car passed, I noticed that in it were four women, all about 65. I followed the car for almost 100 miles, and the driver always used her signal lights and kept her speed at whatever limits were posted. She also slowed 45 mph going through construction. The woman obeyed all the traffic laws and was very courteous. She seemed to have control of her car at all times.

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Response to Road Signs and Signals	four-point intersection served by a traffic light. Eyewitnesses reported that the elderly women had driven through a red traffic signal. It was that simple.	
	6. While giving a road test on a nice sunny weekday, I observed an elderly man (approximately 80) leaving the drivers' license office. Many signs, road markings, etc...are in this area and he turned left going the wrong way on a one-way street. This is an area of heavy traffic, and other drivers were taking evasive action. Tires were skidded, horns were blown, etc...The older driver never indicated anything was wrong and continued blissfully on his way until he came to a two-way street, where a turn put him in the proper direction.	
	7. It was almost the noon hour of a clear spring day. I was driving east on a straight piece of four-lane limited access, divided highway enjoying sparse traffic. As I approached a small town interchange, I was greeted by a vehicle heading toward me, going the wrong direction up the exit ramp. I flashed my lights and sounded my horn while braking, steering for the left lane and checking traffic behind me. The oncoming aged pickup truck stopped at the mouth of the ramp. The driver, a man of about 70-75 years old, looked perplexed. As I eased back into the driving lane, I watched in my mirrors as he turned and started back down the exit ramp.	

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Speed	1. This condition exists everyday in front of a supermarket in a retirement community. Beware! An elderly driver parked his car by making right turns only in the supermarket parking lot. He got out and walked to the crosswalk painted yellow. Just then, an older motorist drove out of the parking area and crossed the pedestrian lane traveling 15 to 20 mph, nearly hitting the old gentleman. The pedestrian, 65 years of age, was still quite spry and jumped back to prevent a bad accident. The driver, the old villain, continued on unperturbed, whistling "Dixie" and scratching.	1. After shopping, as I was walking back to my car, I noticed an older man, about 65, driving very slowly and cautiously, in the parking lot. Just then a car started backing out of a space and didn't look behind him. Had the older man not been very cautious, going very slow, and able to stop well back, he would surely have been hit.
	2. I saw an older man, I'm not sure of his age, but probably over 70, going at least 30 miles an hour through a school zone and knocking signs down. He just kept on going. Kids were near the crosswalk.	2. I observed a car ahead of me on a busy interstate. He left a space of about 4-5 car lengths ahead of his car. Constantly, cars would fill in the gap and he would drop back, probably by taking his foot off the accelerator. His speed was regulated at about 55 mph while others were doing 60-65 mph against traffic regulations.
	3. In my home town, I was following a woman driver of about 70 whom I know personally. She is what I'd call an abominable driver. As she was about to enter the main highway from a side street, wanting to turn left, she was in the middle of the street crawling at a snail's pace. She stopped for the stop sign okay, but when she turned onto the highway, her car was again	3. Senior driver in curb lane of three-lane freeway. Maintained good interval, did not pass any vehicles but held speed with the traffic so no one was forced to pass him. Twice he was seen to adjust his speed on intervals to allow for traffic merging onto the freeway. He had a female passenger but did not divert his attention from his driving with excessive "visiting."

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Speed (continued)	in the center of the road, crawling slowly. She hogged the road all the way to the shopping center. All the cars behind her could do was follow as they were unable to pass. She is eager to offer all her friends a ride, but they all decline without giving her their real reason. 4. A male driver of about 75 years and several young children under 10 years, were riding along a road marked 40 mph. This driver not only was driving too slow, about 20 mph, causing traffic to back up behind him, but when he was ready to make a left turn off the four-lane road, he did so from the right lane with no signal given. 5. A little lady, probably close to 80, drove slowly up a street which has only single lanes with a double yellow line in the center. Cars behind her couldn't pass, causing reckless younger drivers to cross over the double yellow line to overtake her. She didn't pull over even though cars honked at her. 6. One clear, dry morning, on an interstate highway (three lanes each direction) where trucks and buses are restricted to the two right lanes, a man (approximately 68 years of age) and a female passenger of about the same age were driving in the center lane at	4. Recently on a trip, an older man in his late 60's was in front of a long line of traffic. He was driving slower than the limit, but roads were wet because of a driving rain. When the man came to a wide driveway, he pulled in and let the traffic go by. He then backed out and continued. I could see him backing out and starting again as I topped a small rise in the road. This man, recognizing that he was driving slower than the traffic, allowed other drivers to proceed without making them try to pass where there was no passing lane. 5. I was on my way to work, somewhat in a hurry. All of a sudden, I noticed about five cars applying their brakes as if something was wrong. They all finally got in the left lane without running over one another and passed this one vehicle that was moving about 53 mph. As I too passed, I noticed that the driver was about 60 years old. I also noticed the calm, peaceful, contented look on his face. I thought to myself that there is really no need for me to be driving as fast as I was, so I slowed down, and I also noticed that I was less tense. I also thought that four out of the five drivers in front

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Speed (continued)	40 mph in a 55 mph zone. The car was blocking all truck traffic from passing slower moving vehicles in the right lane. Trucks and buses were forced to pass this driver on the right, because he refused to move either to the right or left lanes. He thereby caused a very unsafe condition.	of me probably would get there just as well at a slower pace.
	7. One rainy night as I was driving southbound on an interstate, I noticed that traffic ahead of me was braking and slowing down. On closer inspection it turned out to be that an elderly couple was pulling a trailer behind their truck. That in itself was not unusual to see in the Pacific Northwest. It was the fact that they were driving 40 mph in the fast lane that made the situation unusual and unsafe.	6. Having property in the high country, I do a lot of driving on a two-lane mountainous highway. The highway is good, but passing lanes are limited; this makes passing dangerous if not impossible at times. On a Friday afternoon with heavy traffic, we got in line with several other vehicles behind a motor home pulling a small car. The couple in the motor home, probably retirees, had out-of-state license plates. As soon as he found a suitable area, he pulled off the highway and stopped, letting all of us pass him safely.
		7. A man in his late 60's was pulling a boat on a trailer. He was doing about 52 miles per hour up and down hills. It was a two-lane roadway with double marked lanes, passing prohibited. Cars started to pile up behind him. When he realized the problem, he started to look for openings on his right side so he could park and let them pass. When he found an opening big enough, he slid into it to let the cars pass. Then he continued on his way.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Lane Behavior	1. Older driver had left-turn signal on and kept changing lanes on a four-lane street, making other drivers afraid to pass him.	1. Proceeding on a busy six-lane street, I noticed a car far ahead, waiting to enter the traffic flow which it did safely. When the driver wanted to change lanes, he did so by flashing his turn signal in a timely manner. Finally, when he wanted to turn left to leave the street, he waited until he could safely turn and cross oncoming traffic. He did not cross over to the far left lane three or four miles back before he turned left, as many people do. He was an older driver.
	2. One afternoon, on a two-lane highway, I was following a car driven by an elderly woman at about 35 mph. All of a sudden she evidently saw her turnoff, put on her turn signal to turn into the street, and immediately slowed to a crawl, leaving the rear of her car in the main road traffic lane. Traffic was continuous from the opposite direction and also behind me. I could not swing out to miss the rear of her car. All I could do was brake, hoping that the car behind me would be able to stop, and also the cars behind him.	2. On a rather warm, clear day, a woman of 55-60 years was driving in rush-hour traffic along a multi-lane highway. While others were jockeying back and forth across traffic lanes in an attempt to move up in the pack, she remained in one lane and maintained a steady speed commensurate with conditions at the time. In due time, she signaled and moved into the far right lane safely in advance of approaching the exit she wished to take. Through her patience and maintaining her position and speed, she avoided the possibility of startling other drivers by quick, short lane changes and braking.
	3. On a busy thoroughfare, with vehicles moving at 45-55 mph, I observed an older male driver change lanes without looking in his rear view mirror or checking his blind spots, or signaling his intent.	
	4. Three others and I were passengers in a car being driven by an "over 55" woman. Our route was mountainous and very curving with two lanes on each side of a divided highway. Driving in her left lane, she announced that she felt the speed limit was too	

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Lane Behavior (continued)	high for the continual ascent, descents, and curves. She stated that she was going to drive in her own lane at her own speed. When it was suggested she move into her right lane to do this (her husband concurring), her response was "I don't like that lane. Anyone who wants to pass me can use it."	3. The driver, approximately 70 years of age, was traveling at 50 mph in the right-hand lane. As I approached, I saw him signal left and move into the left-hand lane maintaining 50 mph. He then passed a slower moving vehicle. As he passed the vehicle, he signaled right and returned to the right lane, allowing sufficient room in both incidents. As I passed him, I observed that he was wearing a seatbelt. His driving demonstrated that he was alert to his responsibility to other drivers and the need to allow faster traffic the left lane.
	5. We were traveling on a two-lane highway, doing about 55 mph, when we came upon an elderly couple. The driver, an elderly man in his 60's, was going about 35 mph in the center of the road. He made no attempt to cruise on the right side of the highway. He made it impossible to pass. Cars started to pull up behind me. I slowed down until I was about two car lengths behind, and then I cruised on the right side. Other cars pulled in front of me and started to blink their lights and blow their horns. He ignored all of them and continued in the center lane, forcing other motorists to pass him on the right.	4. I was traveling south on a major interstate freeway. An older driver, about 70, going in the same direction, was driving a 25-26 foot motorhome. This section of freeway was divided into two lanes going in each direction for one hundred miles or more. The older driver was traveling at the posted speed limit. He made lane changes only after making sure that it was safe to do so. When larger trucks tried to pass him, I noticed that he did not try to speed up to keep the larger vehicles from getting ahead of him and blocking his view. When a larger truck passed, he just reduced his speed until the
	6. Late one weekday about dusk, when everyone had headlights turned on, I observed a sedan driven by a woman about 60 years of age. The sedan was in the left middle lane on a divided four-lane street. The lady saw a gas station on the right and probably decided she needed gasoline. She put on her right-turn signal and stopped in the	

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Lane Behavior (continued)	roadway. The rush-hour traffic behind her also stopped. Several cars passed on her right, and she finally made it to the lane to her right and into the gasoline station.	larger vehicle was no longer obstructing his view.
	7. It was a partly cloudy afternoon. The six-lane divided interstate was dry. I was traveling approximately 55 mph and I noticed a car being driven by an elderly man of approximately 65 years of age. My attention was drawn to this car because it was changing lanes ccontinually, using no turn signals and not looking to see if another car might be in his path. His speed was about 45 mph. A woman about his age was a front-seat passenger. The driver acted as if he were the only user of the interstate and others were to watch out for him. He added to the confusion by constantly riding the brake. Other motorists, uncertain of what he might do next, were slowing down considerably and causing a backlog of traffic.	5. Riding the turnpike about two months ago, I was impressed with a male driver who was ahead of me for about 50 miles. He was maintaining the speed of the traffic around him, using signals every time he changed lanes until he and his passenger went into a service area. I believe he was about 65 or older, as was his female passenger.
	8. The older driver stayed in the center lane at a speed slower than the posted speed limits. While this caused little or no problem for cars, which can pass in any lane, the center lane is the passing lane for tractor-trailer units. This causes frustration in the tractor-trailer driver, who must cut his speed and try safely to get around this car.	6. A few days ago, I was driving on an interstate and noticed a man up ahead of me, driving at about the speed I wanted to drive, so I made no attempt to pass. As I followed him for about 150 miles, I observed that he drove well. He maintained good following distance and a constant speed. He kept his eye out for other vehicles. He did a good job of passing and returning to the right lane of a four-lane road. He kept to the right except when passing. There was one thing that he did not do. In all this distance, he used his turn signals just twice.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Lane Behavior (continued)	9. I was northbound on a turnpike. The traffic was moderate and the flow was 55 to 60 mph. I came upon a "Rolling Road Block." In it were a man and woman. He looked to be in his late 60's to early 70's. The car had Florida license plates. He was driving in the middle lane favoring the right side white line. His average speed was 45 mph. If a car or truck tried to pass him, left or right, he would first drift to that side, then speed up. When someone would successfully pass him, he would then brake for a moment. Every time he approached an overhead sign, he stepped on the brake.	
	10. We were on a four-lane highway, and as we entered our regular left turn lane, there was one car in front of us. We both slowed down for the left turn as we were looking out for traffic from the opposite direction. We had nothing to fear from that direction, but we did from the old grey-haired man coming from the outside lane at a high speed, crossing in front of the first lane as well as in front of both of us in the turning lane. As luck would have it, we both had good brakes, thus avoiding an accident.	
Passing	1. One driver was driving at an inconsistent speed. An older driver wanted to pass, but in order not to be going over 55 mph, he stayed beside the other car and forced an oncoming car to go off the road.	1. I have seen this elderly driver bide his time to make a careful, measured pass of a car in front of him. He does not become rattled by those behind him who make a flying leap into the opposing

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Passing (continued)	2. A senior citizen driving a travel-trailer had a tendency to cut short when passing. This was due to his inability to judge distance and traveling speed. Some of these travel-trailers are as large as trucks, but are driven like cars.	lane and roar by, barely avoiding any oncoming car. He moves a little to gauge his distance from oncoming cars and he moves out after displaying his turn signal. He makes a smooth return to his lane well ahead of the slow car he has passed.
	3. I (female, age 70) think I always observe all cars around me via my mirrors. But one sunny day along a freeway, not long ago, I activated by left-turn signal to pass a car in front of me. I must have neglected to look over my left shoulder, and a car in the left lane a bit behind me honked loudly. I was frightened into mending my ways.	
Left Turns	1. On a clear fall day, I was driving east on a two-lane highway. Traffic was light, and I was driving at the speed limit. As I was approaching a crossroad about one hundred yards distant, a car coming from the opposite direction pulled out into the intersection from his left lane. This forced me to brake and take the right shoulder in passing the vehicle. As I passed, I noted an elderly couple in the front seat. I came to a stop on the shoulder, and as I looked back, the driver made a left turn and continued on his way. He had nearly created a fatal accident by failing to stay in his own lane before making a left turn.	1. Driver approaching busy intersection controlled by traffic light. Entered left-turn lane at proper place, and waited for traffic to clear before making left turn. Unable to make turn because light turned red. Waited patiently for light to turn green again, and made turn when safe to do so.
		2. There are three lanes of traffic in each direction with a divider for making left turns. The driver of a vehicle found it necessary to stop for gasoline. In order to avoid making a left turn, he turned into a service station on the right, even though the gasoline

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Left Turns (continued)	2. Recently a woman in her late 50's or early 60's drove slowly along in the left lane of a busy street. Apparently she was looking for an address on the opposite side of the street. Evidently she spotted the address, for suddenly she made a left-hand-turn signal and turned sharply onto, not into, the center lane. She abruptly stopped, leaving the rear of her car in the left lane, blocking traffic. Traffic backed up, and drivers became impatient. Several times, in my opinion, she could have safely completed her left turn; but she didn't. There she sat, and impatience mounted. Finally when some of the drivers blew their horns, she apparently became very nervous and pulled out in front of oncoming traffic. One car stopped short of hitting her, the rest of the traffic slowed down and allowed her to complete her turn, thus avoiding a serious accident.	was 4 cents more than on the other side. Later, he and his passengers also decided to stop at a less desirable eating establishment because it too was located on the right side of the road. These decisions obviated the necessity of having to execute a left turn and then later having to fight across the lanes of traffic to get back into the flow.
	3. An elderly driver decided to cross from the outside right lane directly across the inside lane to the left-turn lane with no signals, and then made a U-turn against oncoming traffic on a no U-turn street.	3. I was riding with an elderly couple on a clear day along a busy city street, two lanes each way with pavement markings but no traffic islands except at intersections (about every 3-4 blocks) where left and right turn lanes were marked. Noticing a "sale" sign at a mini-shopping center across the street, the wife asked her husband please to turn left so she could shop there. Looking ahead, he noticed that there was no light at the next intersection, but he obliged his wife in a safe way by turning right at the next corner and going around the block, using right turns until he could enter the parking area with a right turn.
	4. I made a left turn without checking the blind spot and was run into. I had to replace the left rear fender on my car and the front bumper of the car that ran into me.	4. I observed an 80-year-old citizen's driving habits for approximately two years. Upon completion of my observation, I talked with him in reference to his safe driving habits I

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Left Turns (continued)	5. A man of about 82 was entering the street from a parking lot. It was after dark and raining lightly. In turning to the left past the median, he cut in too soon and the back left wheel went over the median. When the wheel came back down on the street, the whole car swerved into the second left lane.	had noticed. He stated he would drive several blocks out of his way to cross a main street at traffic light and seldom makes a left turn on to a main street. He prefers to make right turns and cross main streets at traffic lights.
	6. Recently a 78-year-old woman, driving on a divided street (two lanes each direction), suddenly made a left turn toward a side street. She was struck while in the intersection by a large truck, whch she probably failed to see, or misjudged its speed. She died shortly after the accident.	
	7. I saw an older driver make a left-hand turn from the right lane.	
Right Turns	1. One day I observed a woman about 60 driving slower than the posted speed limit and holding up traffic behind her. Then, for whatever reason, she made a right-hand turn from the left lane into a shopping center. She never used any sign or signal that she was going to turn. Traffic was passing her in the right lane. She made it, but God was her co-pilot.	1. The woman driver (60-70) was going to turn right at the next intersection, but had to pass two exits from a large shopping center close to the intersection before she turned. Several cars were waiting to exit from the shopping center. In order not to confuse anyone she gently tapped her brakes to caution traffic behind, but did not activate her right turn signal until she had passed the shopping center exits.
	2. On a clear morning before noon, I was driving in the right lane of a three-lane highway	

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Right Turns (continued)	at the posted speed of 50 mph. The car ahead of me was driven by a woman, I would say, in her mid-fifties. She began to slow down to approximately 10-15 mph and continued at this speed for the next two to three hundred feet. Traffic in the middle lane prohibited me from passing. I immediately switched on the hazard signal to warn the traffic behind me and gradually reduced my speed. Suddenly without any indication, she made a right turn into a filling station.	2. This was on a two-lane road going north and south, joining a two-lane road going east and west. Both roads were feeder roads, narrow and busy, with fast traffic in both directions seeking short-cuts to the main roads at rush hour. The older driver ahead, traveling north and wishing to turn east, signaled well in advance of his right turn, stayed within his right lane well to the right side, and turned into the right lane with no interference to other traffic. He was unlike some of those older drivers who swing left just before turning right.
	3. While riding a bike in the right lane, I came to an intersection with a four-way stop. After waiting my turn, I proceeded into the intersection to go straight. At the same time, a car turned right from the middle lane. I swerved my bike, fell off, but avoided a collision. The driver, a 65-year-old male, stopped, but did not attempt to assist me. I don't believe he will ever turn from a middle lane again because not only I, but also his wife, gave him a good tongue-lashing.	3. It was a "right turn on red" corner with a three-lane road "right turn only" lane feeding into a six-lane (three in each direction) main road. The older driver was in the "right turn only" lane and the light was red. In spite of being "urged" to turn at once by a tailgating car moving closer and closer, he waited until turning right looked safe from all directions and then turned.
Yielding/Merging	1. On a nice clear day, I was driving back East. We were on a long straight stretch of good road. A man about 80 years old was on the point of entering the freeway about a mile from us. He stopped at the entrance and sat there until we were almost up to him. Then he	1. On a clear day in January I noticed an elderly driver in his 60's entering the interstate. I was impressed as I noticed how he entered the heavy flow of traffic. He was using his left-hand turn signal and accelerating to the 55 mph speed limit while

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Yielding/Merging (continued)	decided to come out on the highway slowly just in front of us. He swerved over to the left, almost on to the median.	continually checking his mirrors and looking over his shoulder at the traffic. The consideration and alertness of this driver enabled the flow of traffic to continue without interruption. He did a very good job of blending with the traffic and continuing on down the road.
	2. Last week I was approaching the freeway entrance during the hours of minimum freeway traffic, traveling about 30 mph in preparation to increase to 45 mph to enter the right lane. I was following a car driven by a man who appeared to be in his 70's. He was moving at about 25 mph. Suddenly, he stopped completely at the signal, which is never on at that hour. Then from his complete stop, he moved slowly, cautiously onto the entry lane, took the whole entry lane, still with not enough speed, and again stopped. I had given him enough time to get ahead so I easily could enter and move into traffic. Two other cars maneuvered safely into traffic as he just sat there looking back over his left shoulder.	2. As I approached the on-ramp to the freeway, I noticed a very clean 1955 chevy two-door coupe in my mirror. The driver (at least 70) of the car knew I wanted to merge into his lane of traffic, so he blinked his headlights at me and let me in.
	3. Last Monday I was going into the city on an interstate and I was in the center lane. An older man was trying to enter the highway from a service road and instead of matching his speed to the flow of traffic, he drove to the end of the ramp and stopped. He then started from a dead stop into the traffic and was almost "rear ended" by the vehicle coming up behind him.	3. About three weeks ago, I was fixing to get on the interstate highway. There was a car coming. When the elderly driver saw my turn-in signal, she signaled and got over into the left lane, letting me into the traffic safely.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Yielding/Merging (continued)	4. I was cut off by an older driver who while merging into traffic, did so at a slow rate of speed and caused the oncoming traffic to either slow down drastically, or switch lanes suddenly.	
Use of Brakes/ Stopping	1. A man in his 60's with whom I was riding continually accelerated/braked/tailgated/ braked. Never drove smoothly. That kind of driving made me tense and nervous.	1. While driving on an icy two-lane road at 25 mph, the car ahead of me skidded, blocking the road. Fortunately, I had anticipated such a situation, had allowed a gap of about 20 car lengths, and was able to stop safely in about half that distance.
	2. Today, returning home, on a two-lane, two-way road with a road crossing (a two-lane, two-way with a stop sign), I noticed an older driver coming to a rolling stop. He had looked one way (the road was clear) and then looked in my direction. I could see he realized I had slowed because he had not fully stopped. When he saw me coming, he finally made a full stop to avoid a collision. If he had come to a full stop for the stop sign, this incident would not have occurred. I believe he assumed, since it was an off-time of day on a back road, that the road would be clear and he would not need to come to a full stop.	2. In February this year, my brother-in-law, age 65, and I delivered a load of lighting fixtures. Weather was clear on the trip, but the morning we left it was snowing hard and there were several inches on the ground. My brother-in-law was driving the 18-foot truck; and several times he would, after making sure that there wasn't anyone close behind us, pump the brakes to see how the truck reacted. Having gained a feeling for the road, he drove at a lower, safer speed. We were in the snow area for 120 miles and saw several trucks and cars in the ditch.
	3. On a school day, early afternoon, the weather was clear and the traffic was light. I was driving with a friend to a local discount store. The	3. A woman in her early 60's approached a school bus that was stopped on a blind bend. The woman knew that the bus

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Use of Brakes/ Stopping (continued)	intersection has a four-way stop, with school zone signs on the intersecting street. My friend, approximately 55 years of age, waited too long to brake; and when he did stop, the hood of the car was across the crosswalk. After that incident I noticed this was common practice for him, especially at intersections, and an alarming one for other people, both drivers and pedestrians, not to mention his passengers.	was going to let children off. So instead of coming up behind the bus and stopping, she stopped back many feet. In doing this, she set a safe margin for the safety of the bus and children.
	4. I was riding the right lane of the freeway when an older couple, about 70, stopped dead at a freeway exit, looked around, talked a bit, and then proceeded to exit.	4. A lady of about 60-65 was behind a large truck that was signalling to make a right turn. The truck had to get in the left lane in order to keep the trailer from running up on the curb. The lady saw the turn signal flashing on the truck and stopped far enough behind the truck that it could safely make the turn into another street.
	5. I followed an elderly man driving slowly on a "two-lane in one direction" parkway. I could see there was a long gap between him and the car ahead of him, but he pumped his brake pedal whenever traffic in the distance way ahead of him showed brake lights. This made me very nervous because I never knew what his intentions were.	5. The elderly man slowed his vehicle well below the posted speed limit on the icy roadway. He had lived 79 years in the northern states bordering Canada. His many years of driving had taught him that the basic defensive maneuver against icy roads and winter driving was simply to slow down. He noticed the speeding car coming from the rear as they both approached within 300 feet of the "stop" intersection. He started to pump his brakes, hoping the on and off effect of the brake lights would alert the driver of the approaching vehicle. He watched the vehicle in
	6. When I am driving with a woman about 65 years of age, I notice that she steps on the brake whenever she sees a golf cart ahead of her on the right side of the road. She should just slow down, if necessary, and carefully go around the golf cart or stay behind until it's safe to go around. She also	

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Use of Brakes/ Stopping (continued)	steps on the brake as she comes to an intersection. This is especially true if she's talking as she drives. She should not visit as she drives!	his rear view mirror as he slowed and stopped for the stop sign. The grateful teenager stopped his vehicle, sounded his horn, and jumped out and approached the old-timer. Although his primary reason for greeting the old man was that he was lost and needed instructions, he also expressed his appreciation for the flashing tail-lights which alerted him to slow down. 6. An older driver seeing a very small child wander into the middle of the street, stopped his car, and made sure others stopped also until he got the child out of the way of the cars.
Backing/Parking	1. I witnessed a collision of two cars in a shopping center. One older driver was backing out and not looking. The other was driving through the aisles faster than she should, and rear-ended the car backing out. Both were to blame. 2. An older woman backing out of her driveway without looking back for oncoming traffic nearly hit a group of school children on their bicycles. 3. A few days ago at the grocery store, I saw two ladies backing out of a parking space. I would	1. I observed a senior driver about to try backing out of a driveway without hitting a car parked across the street. He checked his rear view mirror and then turned his head, placed his right arm on the back of the front seat, and looked directly through the rear window. He slowly backed up as he checked in all directions. 2. It was a beautiful Saturday afternoon and a very congested grocery store parking lot. Families were shopping, and lots of children were around, either straggling

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Backing/Parking (continued)	judge both to be about sixty. The driver was backing out of the angle parking space, and there was a shopping cart behind her car. This driver backed into the shopping cart and then stopped and looked into her rear view mirror. The cart was in her blind spot. She backed up and hit the cart again. This happened once more before I could get to the car. I moved the cart after getting her attention.	behind or running ahead of parents. A car was parked between a van and a truck, well in, obscuring the view of pedestrians on both sides. An elderly couple, getting into the car, realized it was difficult to see well enough to back out safely. The woman got out of the passenger side, walked to the rear, and directed the driver out before getting back into the car.
	4. An older driver, backing out of a parking space at a large shopping mall, didn't look to the rear. While the driver was backing up, a person walked behind the car. The driver was not aware that the person was there. The person was knocked down and screamed. The driver became unnerved, stepped on the accelerator instead of the brake--the victim was crushed under the car. The driver was a 75-year-old woman.	3. My neighbor, an elderly driver, looked over her shoulder, both left and right, when backing out of a parking space or her driveway.
	5. I saw a driver, male, approximately 65 years of age, get into his car. Without looking thru his rear window or side mirror, he backed from a parking space into the path of a car entering the parking lot. Fortunately, the driver of the second vehicle was driving slowly, saw the car moving backward, and stopped in time to avoid an accident. The driver of the first car was unaware that he had just missed damaging two cars.	4. In the parking lot of a local department store, I watched a driver's wife directing an elderly driver to back out of a parking space that was a little too small for the big car he was driving. This helped him get out without hitting any other parked cars.
		5. A friend (age 74) went to the supermarket. You must pull in to park and back out to leave. She turned around and looked both ways before she pulled out slowly, and avoided backing into a car that had suddenly appeared behind her.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Backing/Parking (continued)	6. I was parked on a busy one-way street, and I watched a man back his car three-fourths of a block across three lanes of traffic using only his rear view mirror. His object was to get a parking space. I would judge the driver to be in his late 60's to 70's.	
Control of Car	1. I saw two women driving in a late-model car ahead of me on a two-lane main highway. It was a clear day, and the road was dry. The driver of the car was busy talking to her passenger, using her hand as she talked. With only one hand on the steering wheel, she didn't have her car under control. She was all over the road, many times going over the solid middle line. Luckily, the traffic wasn't heavy at that time of day. It caused my wife and me to be very nervous.	1. On a winter day in 1986, the roadway was thick with ice. Traffic was heavy because it was afterwork rush hour on an interstate system. A multi-vehicle accident took place, leaving five vehicles badly damaged. A lady of 81 was driving the sixth vehicle to approach the accident. She had her vehicle well under control and was able to stop before becoming involved in the accident. But at this point the next vehicle behind her did not get stopped, and she was struck in the rear and forced in a ditch. While in the ditch, the 81-year-old driver had the presence of mind to steer around a culvert and avoid any serious damage, although her own vehicle had minor damage in the rear. The lady driver was well secured with seatbelt on at the time of the accident.
	2. It was a clear day, about 6:30 am. The road over the mountain is long, steep, and has some rather sharp curves. There are places where the road parallels a steep drop off. As I made a sharp right-hand curve, I was confronted with a motorhome stopped in the middle of the road where there is a steep bank up one side and a drop off on the other side. I managed to stop in time to avoid using either. I found the driver of the motor-home frozen to the steering wheel, unable to speak. His	2. On a clear Friday night, a man about 65 years of age was operating his vehicle in the far right lane of a

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Control of Car (continued)	wife was crying. After calming them down, he told me that he had become frightened and was exhausted, and that he was not accustomed to driving the motor-home anywhere except on a straight highway.	four-lane, undivided, 55 mph highway. He was involved in a serious head-on collision caused by a young male driving under the influence of alcohol. This young driver had three passengers and was attempting to pass two vehicles, in both lanes of his direction of travel. He lost control and swerved into the lane of travel of the elderly man's vehicle. An investigation of this incident revealed the following: The elderly man was utilizing his seatbelt and shoulder harness, was traveling 5 mph below the speed limit, and was able to bring his vehicle to almost a complete stop, on the shoulder of the road prior to impact. His preparation and reaction was a direct cause of the survival of three of the four persons in the other vehicle.
	3. I was driving in a retirement community in a section of new homes under construction. The street had no sidewalks and there was a drop off from the curb to the dirt. I was going about 10 mph and admiring these homes. Before I knew it, my car went over the curb, the steering wheel was yanked out of my hands, and I was soon stuck between road and dirt. I had one hell of a time freeing my car, but managed to get it on the dirt and proceeded on my way. Luckily no damage, but in the split second of not watching the road, I had lost control.	
	4. The female driver was taking four ladies from their residence for a weekend of celebrating. She was constantly lighting cigarettes and turning her head around to carry on conversation with backseat passengers. A little later on, she was again lighting a cigarette and nearly rear-ended a truck ahead of her. Her sudden stop caused the car to swerve and run off the road. The passengers were so frightened that they insisted the "hostess" pull to the side of the road and another lady replaced her at the wheel.	3. A hit-and-run driver ran the stop signal and hit my right rear fender about eighteen inches from the back of it. It turned my car around and I was headed straight into a tree. I knew I dare not hit it head on. I remember that somewhere in the driving course it stated always pull to the right, which I did. I missed the tree which was in a man's yard, but a branch of it was too low for my car to go under. This limb crushed

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Control of Car (continued)		the left side of my car, but I was thankful to still be alive. Also glad I did not panic.
		4. The tour bus had several senior citizens plus other passengers, and was traveling on a two-lane highway, good visibility clearance, and traveling within the 55 mile speed limit. All at once a car came toward us from a side road. Our bus driver, in his fifties, was an excellent driver. He very gently applied his brakes and veered to the right to try to avoid an out-of-control car from hitting the bus. He had control of the bus but had to stop on a very soft shoulder of the highway. No one was seriously injured, but the bus doors were jammed and we had to wait until the wrecker came and lifted the front of the bus to get us out. The good sound judgment and quick thinking of this bus driver prevented injuries to several passengers.
Safety Sense/ Judgment	1. An elderly couple pulled off to the right shoulder of the road. Their car was half on the shoulder and half on the traffic lane. The man, in his late 60's, opened his car door and left it opened. Several cars almost hit his door and had to swerve into the incoming lane, which resulted in an accident.	1. Coming home on the freeway, we saw a car up ahead of us pull off the road. We slowed as much as we could, and saw the car had a flat. We were afraid the older driver would open the door and get out in traffic lane; instead, his wife got out and he slid across the seat and then out. They were

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Safety Sense/ Judgment (continued)	A few minutes later, a truck came by and took the door off the car, and the elderly couple ended up in the hospital.	older people, and played it safe.
	2. One day around noon, I was going to the cafeteria for lunch. They have a two-way road entrance. I turned in, and there were cars parked on the road entrance near the building, which was not meant for parking cars. I was driving very slowly as there wasn't much room without getting into the exit lane. All of a sudden, a woman opened her car door in front of my car just as I was about to pass. Naturally, my bumper nearly took her door off and might have injured her. She had been careless.	2. While walking recently, I saw an older man park his car on the street, pulling over as far as possible to keep the traffic lane open, and then sit patiently until traffic had cleared before he made any attempt to open his door and step out of the car.
	3. On a dark night on a major highway, I saw an elderly woman waving her arms to direct traffic away from a disabled car. She was standing about ten feet in front of the back end of the car which was in the left lane. The car had no lights or flashers operating. As it turned out, her husband had gone to get help, and left her to guard against an accident. They had no emergency equipment of any kind.	3. As I was following a vehicle on an interstate, it had a blow-out at 50-55 mph. The car swerved off to the side, and as I went past I noticed that the elderly driver and passengers appeared to be shaken. I pulled over to see if I could be of some assistance. As I walked to his car, the driver was already opening the trunk. I walked to the back of the car and was surprised to see that he had all sorts of safety equipment ready to display behind his vehicle. He had road flares and reflective triangles, and he even knew how to space them on the road.
	4. My office was in the city hall of a small town of 1,500. One stormy winter day, when there was an advisory against travel because of a snow storm, several	4. During a somewhat blustery, winter day, a telephone inquiry was received from an elderly woman. She was concerned about road and upcoming weather conditions. Although

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Safety Sense/ Judgment (continued)	older couples had driven as much as fifteen miles from other towns to be at their senior citizens' meetings. I feel this was an unsafe act because the meeting was for entertainment and not required.	road conditions at the time were not prohibitive, they were expected to deteriorate soon. Rather than take a chance, this lady correctly decided to postpone her travels until conditions improved.
	5. One day an older driver was taking his three grandchildren to the movies. While he was backing out of the drive, his wife motioned to him that he had a phone call. The car was on a slight incline and the driver shut the engine off and left the car in gear. One of the children started to play driver and somehow the car started to roll down the drive. The older girl cut the wheel and the car missed hitting another one in the street and stopped against the curb.	5. On a snowy winter weekday morning, a male driver about 65 years of age was preparing to do several errands within a 15-mile radius of his home. After listening to a local radio station about weather and roadway conditions, he reevaluated the importance of his planned travel. As the weather and roadway conditions improved, he proceeded with the planned trip in a vehicle equipped with a blanket, shovel, and bag of sand. The driver also left a note indicating his planned route, stops and expected return time. This sensible behavior is clearly an indicator of safe driving at any age.
	6. On a Sunday morning going north, I moved into the middle turn lane to turn west. While I was waiting there, an elderly woman pulled up just north of me going south on the lane to my right. She stopped and waved me to come ahead and turn in front of her because she wanted to turn east. I should have ignored her order because on the lane to her right, a car came along headed south and hit me. The lesson I learned was to ignore orders by another driver and never make a left turn in the middle of the block.	6. Today I saw a truck driver tailgating an elderly lady. (Yes, Virginia, we have some bad apples in trucks too!). The woman did the best thing she could do; she accelerated slightly, turned her right-turn signal on and moved to the right out of his way. He went past her and was gone. She knew that a car is no place to assert your territorial
	7. Before making a left-hand turn on a double-lane city	

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Safety Sense/ Judgment (continued)	street, I was in the left-hand turn lane waiting for the heavy traffic to get by. A truck stopped and motioned me to go ahead and make the turn. As I was turning in front of him, I couldn't see what was coming on the outside lane, but eased on out, and a car came out of nowhere and hit my right front fender. The cop said to never take somebody else's word, to be sure that you can see for yourself before crossing. 8. While vacationing in Colorado, a friend of ours needed to get to a place on the other side of the lake, which was several miles around. Another friend volunteered to take her in his pickup. We are all in the 65-75 age group. She came back really shook up because he had stopped in the middle of the road, a two-lane road with curves and grades, every time he saw something interesting. She was afraid they were going to get rear-ended.	rights. Don't grit your teeth and stay in front of a maniac who is tailgating you. Move over and let him go on to his just reward. 7. A friend was to pick up a group of ladies to go to a luncheon. The night before, she found out that she had been assigned six ladies. She called the chairman and told him that was too many as she did not like to drive with three people in the front seat. Other arrangements were made for two of the group. 8. An acquaintance of mine was getting ready to take her 15-year-old granddaughter to the shopping mall. As they got into the car, my friend changed from her high-heeled shoes to some low-heeled, sturdy shoes. Her granddaughter asked why she was changing shoes, and my friend explained that she made it a practice never to drive while wearing high-heeled shoes. She added that several years earlier, she had narrowly avoided a serious accident when the heel of her high-heeled pump had gotten stuck under the accelerator and she couldn't control the speed of the car. Quick thinking had led her to turn off the ignition and there was no accident. But she was so frightened of what might have

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Safety Sense/ Judgment (continued)		happened that she resolved never to drive in any but "sensible" shoes.
		9. During one of the first heavier snowstorms of the winter, I stopped at a service area for coffee and equipment check. Upon leaving, I noticed a couple of retirement age, just ahead of me, walking to their car in the parking lot. After I checked my tractor and trailer, I climbed into the cab and prepared to get underway. As I checked both mirrors and glanced to the left, I saw the same gentleman proceed to the rear of his car with a snowbrush, to clean his windows and taillights of snow that had accumulated. All too many times people stop for food or restroom services, hurry back to their car, turn on their windshield wipers, and leave. They just don't take that extra 30 seconds to make sure they will see to the rear or be seen by someone behind them.
		10. I took a long trip as the passenger of a man well over 55 years of age. After being on the road for about two hours, he pulled into a rest area and had everyone leave the vehicle to walk around and freshen up. During this time he also walked around the vehicle to check the tires and lights. He stated, "I do this every two hours on a trip to

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Safety Sense/ Judgment (continued)		keep fresh and alert so that if an emergency situation does arise, I will be able to respond quickly to it."
		11. On what appeared to be an open two-lane road through rolling farm country, two cars were running up a hill at about the speed limit, one behind the other, with several hundred feet between them. As the first driver approached the top of the hill, he lightly pumped his brakes several times, substantially reducing his speed. The following driver had plenty of time to slow down too. As the cars moved on, over the top of the hill and down the other side with no sign of hazard, the second driver wondered what that was all about. Then he realized that the first driver had recognized that his sight distance had been greatly shortened by the hill and he could not see what was over the top. There could have been a farm vehicle pulling out, or an animal on the road, or even children.
General Responsiveness to Environment	1. As an older driver left a shopping mall, a heavy rain shower developed. The driver entered the on-ramp for an expressway. The rain was so severe that visibility was extremely limited. As he approached the merging lane, his windshield wipers stopped. Normally a driver in this	1. I was traveling down a through street on the inside lane. A van was beside me on the outside lane. He made a right turn into a side street, blocking my view of the street, so I slowed down. I was glad I did, as a car came from the street and made a left turn. If I hadn't

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
General Responsiveness to Environment (continued)	position is building up speed to merge with expressway traffic, and his attention is focused on the merging process. The driver in this case could not see anything, so he stopped his vehicle in the merging lane, without any effort to move to the wide shoulder. Several vehicles narrowly missed hitting him in the rear before he pulled onto the shoulder of the road.	slowed, there would have been a bad accident. I had the right of way. There was a stop sign on the side street.
	2. We were going east on a main street when we noticed that the car up ahead was all over the road. The driver appeared to be striking at something in the car. He lost control, went into a fence, did a lot of damage to his car, and certainly gave himself some bad moments. It seemed a bee had been in his car. He should have pulled over and stopped, opened windows, and the bee could have flown out. I asked him if he needed help as he was not too steady an older man. He said, "No," backed up the car, and took off.	2. On a two-lane highway, an impatient driver in front of me attempted to pass the car in front of him. There was another car coming from the opposite direction, on a collision course. The elderly driver in the car that was being passed recognized the dangerous situation and pulled to the right and off the highway. This allowed the dangerous passing motorist to swing back to his side of the road and pass.
	3. While driving on a three-lane highway, I witnessed an incident involving an older driver. His car was in the middle lane as was mine. We were traveling about 50 to 55 mph. About one hundred and fifty feet in front of us, a car in the right lane was involved in a minor accident with a car entering from the ramp. The two cars that bumped pulled off to the side out of traffic.	3. Traveling with my wife and young daughter in the left lane of a hilly two-lane road (two lanes each direction) at the speed limit, 50 mph, I crested a hill. The car in front of me swerved to the right lane to reveal a small car stopped at the bottom of the hill. In the lane beside me was a car driven by a man, approximately 58 years of age, with a female passenger in front and two teenagers in the back seat. As he saw what was happening in front of us, he moved to the shoulder of the road and allowed me and the cars behind me enough room to pass the stopped car.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
General Responsiveness to Environment (continued)	The car in front of me, which was driven by an older person, suddenly slowed and stopped. The old timer had kind of panicked or froze upon seeing the accident. He totally forgot he was in the middle lane of a major expressway and almost caused a major accident. I don't believe he looked in his mirror, because if he had seen how close I came to rear ending him, he might have passed away from fear. I believe many older drivers are not conscious of where they are when driving down a highway. Not being aware of what is going on around you is an example of "unsafe older driver behavior."	4. The two-lane highway is well maintained in winter, but there are times when the snow/sleet comes down either unexpectedly or in such quantity that the road crews cannot keep things in perfect driving conditions. One such day the snow/sleet came down so fast that even windshield wipers couldn't do a very good job. The driver in front of me was doing a good clip--45 mph--as the snow first came down, but as the road became more and more slippery, I noted that the driver put on headlights and taillights, and slowed the vehicle gradually to turtle speed. That was fortunate, for as he approached the outskirts of town, a speeding vehicle in the opposite direction did not negotiate a curve and moved suddenly, and in a careening manner in front of the cautious driver, and landed in the ditch on the opposite side of the road. Several drivers stopped and ran to help the driver in the overturned vehicle. Then I learned that the driver of the vehicle in front of mine was 82 years old! His good judgment in slowing down in that slippery, sleety situation kept him out of trouble despite his advanced years.
	4. The older driver came to a stoplight on a two-lane highway, one lane in each direction. After a while it became apparent that the red signal was stuck and cars began to pile up behind him. Cars in the opposite direction began ignoring the red light which was also stuck on their side, and kept moving. This left little chance for cars behind the older driver to pass safely, but he refused to do anything except stay put. He said he was not about to pass a red light just because others thought he should.	
	5. A serious accident had occurred on the southbound side of a major highway, and traffic was stopped on that side until the accident could be cleared.	5. It was raining heavily and the driver was coming into the city on the freeway. He had his family with him and

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
General Responsiveness to Environment (continued)	An older driver became frustrated by the wait and tried backing up until he ran into a solid mass of cars behind him. Then he tried to cross a wide, grass divider into the northbound side and found himself facing a mass of rubbernecking drivers stalled in their cars. I came upon him in a soft part of the divider where he had become stuck while trying to back to return to the southbound side, and I issued him a citation.	was maintaining the minimum speed of about 40-45 mph because of the road conditions. As he rounded a left curve, he kept to the right side of the right lane, and as he did so he noted a semi-truck passing to his left. Then, to his surprise, he saw that the truck was hydro-planing and had begun sliding into his lane. Fortunately, there was a right shoulder, so he quickly drove onto it, slowed to a stop, and put on his signal lights. I believe the driver adjusted to the road and weather conditions and was aware of precautionary steps to take to avoid an accident.
		6. One morning recently, I followed a man and woman (about 65 years old) driving on a street that had school zones. They were driving at the legal speed for approaching school zones. Some children ignored the safety officer and rushed out into the crosswalk in front of their car. They were alert to the possibility of children doing this and stopped at a safe distance.
		7. I was driving south on an interstate about 11 o'clock on a clear night. Two cars were about 1/2 to 3/4ths of a mile ahead of me. We had been driving in this pattern for about 20 minutes. When I saw the brake lights come on on

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
General Responsiveness to Environment (continued)		both cars just as they disappeared over the crest of the hill, I realized that something in their path caused them to put on brakes. I slowed down from the 60 mph I was driving and became more alert. When I came to the top of the hill I was prepared to do what was necessary to control my vehicle. I saw the road was blocked by an overturned tractor trailer. I pulled to the shoulder of the road and drove past the accident, stopped, came back, and helped place flares at the crest of the hill. The brake lights indicated something caused these vehicles to brake. By going past the accident, I was clear of traffic coming over the hill until we could get flares placed.
Attention to Driving	1. On a divided local street (two lanes in each direction), with a speed limit of 40 mph, a male driver of about 70 years of age with a passenger of a similar age, was driving at about 30 mph. The traffic was fairly heavy but the driver was carrying on an animated conversation while waving his arm. He was obviously not aware of the traffic around him, and it was piling up behind because of his actions. As he approached an intersection, he suddenly decided he wanted to make a turn. Without any warning or use of direction signals, he applied his brakes and swung into a left turn. He was still	1. Mrs. X was taking four ladies out for a shopping spree. The ladies were all good friends, who smoked and talked continuously. Finally, when the group stopped for coffee, Mrs. X told her guests that she was getting extremely nervous and all the smoking and talking was distracting her and making her ill. She was concerned that she might have an accident. The four guests stated they were both embarrassed and sorry, and would quit their silly talk and smoking while riding the remainder of the way.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Attention to Driving (continued)	talking after he made the left turn--and was in a world of his own.	2. My father, a retired truck driver, picked me up at my house in order for me to pick up my car. He got out of the car and cleaned the windshield and walked around to check things before we left. I said to him, "Let's use the expressway." He replied, "No, I'm not as sharp as I used to be and besides they travel too fast; I'd rather use the local road." While driving, I noticed he still used his mirror and would not engage in conversation with me. Although he is in his early 70's, he knows his limitations and does not let his mind wander while driving.
	2. Returning from the airport the other day, I was following a car driven by a man 65-70 years old. We were on the freeway and the driver had several passengers in his car. While driving he was using his hands in gesturing, pointing, and not watching what he was doing. He did not seem to know where he wanted to get off the freeway and appeared to be an unsafe driver. The advice from my wife was, "Let's get away from this yokel."	
	3. We were driving in the right lane of a very busy four-lane street. There were four grey-haired people in the car ahead of us. A man was driving and a lady was beside him in the front seat. The driver had turned his head toward the lady and was talking up a storm. Several times, in the length of one block, his car went over the white line to the left. As he came up to the intersection, he slowed down but not soon enough, and he bumped the car ahead. Traffic stopped, the men got out of their cars to survey the damage.	3. My friend is just past 65 years of age, and she has no traffic violations to her discredit. Her husband died six months ago and she is still in deep mourning and depressed much of the time. We were on our way to a church meeting 19 miles away. My friend was driving with three passengers in the car. As I got in the car, I noticed that her seatbelt was fastened. Her purse was on her right side and she removed it so that I would be reminded to fasten mine. Her mood was subdued but not depressed or so it seemed. On the way, we talked freely but my friend left most of the talking to us so she could concentrate on the road, she said. She did say
	4. An elderly man was driving on a two-lane street with three other passengers in the car. He was in rush hour traffic in	

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Attention to Driving (continued)	the afternoon and going about 20 mph in a 35 mph zone. He was talking to the other passengers and would turn his head to look at them instead of watching the road. Consequently, the car was wandering in his lane and at times would cross the center line.	something now and then, smiled and listened to us most of the time. The radio was silent. Traffic on the freeway was heavy but she knew the road and handled the car well. We felt relaxed and safe and enjoyed the ride home because she was in control of herself, the situation, and the car.
	5. A friend of mine was driving and I was a passenger in her car. She was trying to turn left on to a boulevard from a side street with a stop. She was busy talking to me and half-way watching the traffic. There had been several openings in the traffic when she could have turned on to the boulevard. Instead, she suddenly made her move to turn in front of a car approaching from the left, which had to reduce its normal speed so she could make the turn in front of it.	4. A 72-year-old driver was taking some older ladies to a birthday party. She had all her passengers buckle-up, and asked them to please not smoke for it bothered her when she was driving. She also asked them not to distract her by talking too much or asking her questions which required her attention. She said she wanted to concentrate on her driving so they all would arrive safely.
	6. I was a passenger riding with a man 80 years old and his wife on a Sunday morning. We were driving down a very heavily traveled highway with several side streets leading into it from the right. All of a sudden, Mr. X put on his right turn signal and his wife said "No," and he didn't turn. At this time, a car, ready to pull out of a right side street, had to slam on his brakes. The driver of the car I was in veered to keep from hitting him: it was a near miss. My driver had traveled this road	5. When my mother was still able to drive (until she was 75 years old), she would not drive with the radio on or allow it to be turned on. She was well aware of the fact that because of her age she had lost some of her hearing, and she did not want the radio on to distract from normal traffic noise or sounds that one should be listening for. 6. I was once involved in a situation which demanded cautious driving. We were

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Attention to Driving (continued)	numerous times and knew he was not to turn at that street, but he was talking a blue streak and not paying any attention to where he was going. 7. On a clear, warm morning, I was driving on a divided limited access state highway of two lanes of one direction. I was surprised to meet a south-bound out-of-state automobile containing two elderly couples casually enjoying the scenery. It was evident the driver had turned onto the divided highway in the wrong direction. All access roads have one-way signs and, of course, the lines on the pavement would have helped him realize the situation he was in. At any rate, there was a mental lapse somewhere. 8. An older driver was pre-occupied with talking to passengers, turning his head in their direction and reaching into the back seat to control children. Result: a rear-end collision. 9. The section of freeway on which I was traveling had four lanes of traffic in each direction. All at once, brake lights began to appear and vehicles ahead began making dangerous and unsafe lane changes. I slowed down, and after about half a mile, I came upon an elderly couple traveling in the number three lane at a speed of about	visiting a friend from fifty miles from home. Snow began falling gently early in the afternoon but increased as the day wore on, making roads very slippery. It was the first significant storm of the season, but I knew that my tires were ready for the conditions. My first move was to cut the visit short in order to get home before dark. Before starting out, I had a friend put approximately 200 pounds of weight in the trunk as ballast. Although I could have made the trip by thruway, I chose another main route where traffic would be somewhat lighter and slower. I knew I would be meeting traffic on a two-lane highway for part of the distance, but preferred facing it to the splashing and decreased visibility that always results when large vehicles pass. We wore our seatbelts and I drove with headlights on. En route, I drove under 55 mph but not so slowly that I held up others; very few people passed even when we were on a divided highway. As I neared a steep grade or intersection or saw cars ahead slowing down significantly, I shifted into gear rather than depending on brakes alone. Meanwhile, I kept the windshield as clear as possible even though it was accompanied by a rasping squeak as the iced blades pressed on the glass. I also used rear view mirrors to check whether drivers behind

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Attention to Driving (continued)	35 mph. They appeared to be in their early 70's. As I passed them, I looked down from my vehicle into theirs. I was horrified to see the male driver trying to read a road map while driving along on the freeway.	me were getting impatient. During the entire trip I kept well behind traffic in order to allow stopping space in a crisis. My passengers and I didn't visit much and all were relieved when it was over. Driving took my full concentration and more.
Intersection Behavior	1. While going east in the outside lane of a good three-lane street, I had to stop at an intersection for a red traffic light. A man who appeared to be in his early 60's stopped in the middle lane next to me. In the intersection was a car being driven by a young woman waiting to make a left turn. When the light changed to green, the man immediately sped into the intersection and then had to brake quickly to avoid a collision with the car making the left turn. His incautious actions could have caused a serious accident.	1. When I happen to be the first car at a signal light and the light changes to green, one of my habits is to check the traffic on my left and right to make sure all cars have actually stopped. More than once I have avoided cars that have gone thru signal lights.
	2. The other day I was driving on a four-lane road and saw this vehicle coming from the opposite direction at a high rate of speed for the given area. I gave a left-turn signal as I approached the intersection. It appeared that all of a sudden he decided to make a right turn into the same intersection. It was a four-lane road we were turning into. I yielded to him at a safe distance. He turned right from the lane next to the center line and crossed over	2. At an intersection of two heavily traveled roads, the light turns green for drivers entering from one of them (right or left turn). A safe older driver waited before entering intersection to be sure drivers (both east and west) had slowed to a stop. Too many times these drivers barrel on thru even though the light has turned red.
		3. Traffic was at proper speed and the light turned yellow before we got to the intersection. Two cars accelerated and went through. I did not; I stopped. There was plenty of room in front and back to safely stop.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Intersection Behavior (continued)	to the left of the center lane that he was entering. Luckily, no one was coming in the oppposite direction. He was driving too fast to safely make the turn, and he turned from the wrong lane, and into another wrong lane. No prize winner he. 3. Recently, I observed the following incident. The stop light had turned green and at an intersection, an elderly lady in a 1978 Oldsmobile started out of the intersection okay, but then she wanted to make a left turn to get across to the shopping center on the left. Instead of getting into the left lane, she rode the middle of the road, never indicating what her intentions were. She just sat there in the middle of the intersection and the cars started to pile up behind her. She was holding up cars traveling both ways--cars going north on the avenue and cars going east on the cross street. This was a very unsafe incident in more ways than one. 4. Mrs. L is 71 and has been driving 50 years. Her arthritis causes stiffness which makes her nervous in heavy traffic. On this trip she was on a four-lane divided highway in the heaviest evening traffic. She was driving in the left lane about 30 mph, and the faster-moving cars were pulling in front of her. She	4. On a Saturday afternoon, an elderly woman about 65 was driving to a parade in the middle of town. She had her two grandchildren with her. Each time she approached an intersection she made a complete stop when there was a stop sign, looked left, right, and then left again, before entering the intersection. At one such intersection, a car was approaching on the left with its right blinker on. She waited until the approaching car had begun to make its turn before she began to enter the intersection cautiously. This was a safe driving lesson by example. It helped teach the children in the car a proper driving maneuver.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Intersection Behavior (continued)	reached the intersection for her left turn (her reason for being in the left lane). This intersection was controlled by a traffic light plus a green left-turn arrow. As it happened, traffic coming toward her was congested--so much so that cars in left lane were stopped on both sides of the light. Since this lane was not moving, she assumed the other (right) lane wasn't either. So, instead of waiting for the green left-turn arrow, she made her left turn on the green light. A car moving through the intersection in the right lane hit her car broadside.	

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Body Size	1. One clear day I was driving on a two-lane back road with no posted speed. Traffic was traveling about 45 mph and fairly heavy. I came upon a car going about 20 mph with two elderly people. The man driving appeared to be in his 70's and the passenger in her 60's. They could hardly see over the dashboard. Traffic was building up behind me and there was too much traffic ahead for anyone to pass.	1. The woman (70+), a neighbor in this rural area lacking public transportation, knows that the car is vital for her independence. She is short and cannot see well over the hood of the car. At first she put pillows on the seat, but they didn't work. Then she took her car to a dealer and had the seat raised so that her short stature would not be a handicap. She also had the seat moved forward so that she could reach the brake and gas pedals without stretching. She recognizes the problems associated with aging and deals with them intelligently.
Vision, Hearing and Other Senses	1. Three times a week I rode to a spa with a neighbor about 78 years old. He had cataracts in both eyes and could not see well. On clear days with little traffic, he somehow managed, but on bad weather days and in heavy traffic, he came close many times to having an accident. Driving with him was very unsafe until he had his eyes operated on for the cataracts and got new glasses. 2. We weren't driving fast. We had just come out of the mobile home park onto the highway. A half block ahead, I saw the signal light at the	1. One day my mother-in-law, age 72, and I were driving to another town. She was at the wheel, and she told me that she had been noticing while driving that her vision wasn't as sharp as it used to be. She said this problem had just started to become a problem and she was a bit hesitant to drive. We discussed it and she decided to go see an eye specialist. She learned that she had a cataract on one eye. She had surgery and a transplant. and now her sight is back to 100%.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Vision, Hearing and Other Senses (continued)	intersection turn yellow, then red. Suddenly the car in front of me stopped. It was at least 3 or 4 car lengths from where he should have stopped. As I passed, I recognized my neighbor who was legally blind. I don't know why he was driving that day. He was lucky he got home safely. Makes me wonder how many other drivers with poor vision are on our highways.	2. One night, a man with 60 years of experience driving many types of trucks and cars without accident, realized (on promptings from his wife) that his night vision was deteriorating. He decided to relinquish the night driving to his wife. The insurance company put the icing on the cake by providing a discount for the promise of not driving after dark. That man is me.
	3. On several occasions I have met older drivers who have not had their eyes checked on a regular basis. They lean over the steering wheel, close to the inside surface of the windshield, straining their eyes in order to drive safely. In most cases, they are unaware of what they are doing. A very awkward and dangerous driver for the traffic scene.	3. An elderly man was cautiously driving on a busy thoroughfare with his radio on. He noticed all the cars pulling over to the curb and stopping, and he did the same. An emergency vehicle passed, but he had heard so siren. This caused him concern so he consulted an audiologist and discovered a serious hearing defect in high-pitched sounds. He was fitted with hearing aids, which have made him a much safer driver.
	4. An elderly couple in their 80's used to strike terror in the hearts of drivers. They lived several miles out of town and he could drive, but he couldn't see. She couldn't drive and was deaf; but she could see, so she was the navigator. The back roads were quite narrow and, believe me, when we saw their old-fashioned car coming toward us, we took hasty action to get well out of their way. They worked this partnership for many years, and I never did hear of them having an accident, but it was scary.	4. During an extended trip, I followed an older driver about age 65-70 for several miles to see what type of violations I could observe, if any. The road was dry and it was a nice sunny day. His speed was steady, about 50 to 55 mph, and he drove in his driving lane most of the time. He kept his eyes on the road. He passed several other cars and used his turn signal when he pulled into the passing

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Vision, Hearing and Other Senses (continued)		lane and when he returned to the driving lane. His speed was about 58 mph when he passed. His vehicle was in excellent condition even though it was ten years old. He wore glasses and a hearing aid, which told me that he knew his eyesight and hearing were impaired and had corrected the situation.
Flexibility and Muscle Strength	1. My neighbor backed out of his driveway without looking in both directions because he couldn't easily turn his head. When the ability to move the head is lessened, driving can be very dangerous. 2. I was proceeding north on a four-lane undivided city street in the lane nearest the center of the road. Another vehicle slightly ahead of me in the outside lane, traveling in the same direction, driven by an elderly woman, started drifting into my lane as we approached an intersection. I honked my horn to gain her attention and braked to avoid a sideswiping collision. She continued into my lane, never giving any indication that she saw or heard my vehicle. We were both well within the speed limit and you would not describe the incident as a near-miss. Her mistake was that she failed to take into account the blind spot where another vehicle cannot be seen in either the rear view mirror or the outside rear view	1. My brother was crippled with arthritis. It began when he was 19. He was terribly crippled from about age 30 until his death at age 77. His back and legs were badly impaired. His neck was stiff. Early in his life he equipped his car with mirrors and other safety items which he needed to be a safe driver. After he married, his wife acted as his navigator. If it was necessary for him to travel alone, he followed all safety rules. He was a good driver, and he drove up until six months before his death, which was brought on by other causes, not his arthritis. He was never involved in an accident, and I am sure I am safe in saying he never caused one. He knew his limitations; he learned how to compensate for them, and he practiced the learning.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Flexibility and Muscle Strength (continued)	mirror. She did not turn and look to her left rear. I am convinced that a great many older people have difficulty in turning their heads far enough to see this blind spot.	
Reaction Time/ Coordination	1. Just recently our 75-year-old neighbor had an accident. She was driving on a four-lane street in the city. She was in the left-hand lane coming upon a car that had his signal on for a left-hand turn. At this time she decided to switch to the right lane and was using her rear-view mirror. But upon telling us the story, she admitted her reflexes weren't as good as they used to be. When she finally took her eyes off the rear view mirrors, which she stated she spent too much time at, the distance had lessened, and she hit the car waiting to turn left.	1. Two boys were riding bicycles and having a wonderful time. They were riding on the left of the street facing oncoming traffic. An older woman was driving her car in the same direction. Suddenly, the boys, without checking traffic, swerved across the street directly in the path of the car. She quickly turned into the curb and just barely avoided hitting the boys. Her quick actions avoided a possibly serious accident.
	2. About six weeks ago, I gave a driving test to a male age 72. The test was mandatory because he had been involved in three automobile accidents in the past twelve months. All had been right-of-way accidents, and this was a special examination. As we started the test, I noticed that he was wearing glasses, tri-focals. We were waiting at the Department of Public Safety driveway, getting ready to pull onto the highway when I noticed the first problem. The subject looked to the left and saw no one coming. He then looked to	2. On a clear sunny afternoon a lady, approximately 73 years of age, came into the office to have her license renewed. She was walking with a walker and appeared to be very feeble. A review exam was required before renewal. The first skill I checked on the driving test was her reaction and strength by having her make an emergency quick stop on command. Her reaction time and ability to slide the tires indicated that her reaction and strength of legs were good. Throughout the driving test, I watched her turning her head and checking traffic very closely, not

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Reaction Time/ Coordination (continued)	the right to clear traffic and pulled on to the highway. His reflexes were so slow that by the time he had looked both ways and slowly pulled on to the highway, a vehicle that had not been a hazard when he first looked, was so close it had to brake to allow us to pull on to the highway. His reflexes and reaction time had obviously diminished over the years. This often happens, and the persons it is happening to are the last to realize it. They still believe that their driving is as good as it was twenty years ago.	allowing one intersection to go by without turning and checking. This, with little or no problems on the rest of the driving test, convinced me that she was aware of safe driving procedures and was physically and mentally capable.
Mental Status	1. Recently I gave a driving test to a male about 73 years of age. He knew where he wanted to go, but was constantly lost. He could find his way around only by familiar place, street, and landmarks. When he got lost, he would start looking for something familiar to guide him. At the same time, he would stop his vehicle. He never would pull to the side of the road to stop. During the test, we stopped in the inside lane of a four-lane two-way street, in the middle of a right turn, and in the middle of an intersection. 2. As I turned right to drive on a two-lane road, a male motorist, at least 85 years old, coming in the opposite direction turned into my lane. To avoid a head-on collision, I drove my right-hand wheels up	1. On a lonely stretch of interstate I saw a large motorhome parked on the shoulder with emergency flashers on. Upon stopping to see if help was needed, I found an elderly woman putting emergency reflectors out. It developed that she was alone, had heard a strange noise for several miles, and wanted to find out what was wrong. I found that an exhaust pipe bracket had broken from vibration and was causing the pipe to rattle against the frame. I was able to make temporary repairs for her. The fact that she stopped in a lonely place, with the emergency flashers on, then also put out reflectors (it was daylight) showed that she knew what to do, and kept in control of herself.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Mental Status (continued)	onto the corner landscaping. There is no curb there, thank goodness. When I asked him what he was doing in my lane, he said, appearing totally confused, that he wanted to turn left onto the two-lane road so he thought he should be in my lane. Both the young driver behind this elderly gentleman and I then suggested he give up driving. His judgment had been seriously affected by age.	2. A car approaching from opposite direction veers over divider line into a head-on collision position. Safe older driver has been constantly alert to all traffic conditions in area immediately adjacent to position of vehicle. Driver recognizes danger at earliest possible moment when opposite driver begins to veer and immediately looks for a way out. Steers onto shoulder and partially into ditch, keeping firm control of his vehicle and avoiding head-on. A cool head if ever I saw one.
	3. An elderly driver became disoriented and confused in traffic and instead of applying the brake, applied the accelerator. His car jumped the curb and hit a bus bench.	3. The traffic on the freeway was moving at about 55 mph. From behind us two cars came racing through the traffic, weaving in and out. The cars had just passed us when they collided and sent one of them spinning out of control into the center divider, back into the freeway traffic--and heading directly into a car in the next lane. The driver that the spinning car was headed for swerved to his left and passed him without touching him. When he got out of his car, our family was really surprised. He was a man of at least 60. If it had not been for his alertness, remaining calm and knowing what to do, the accident probably would have been deadly.
	4. A man about 70 was driving on a city main street and was at an intersection when emergency vehicles were heard coming behind him. He panicked and turned into oncoming traffic and stopped--creating a very dangerous situation.	
	5. I was driving on a four-lane street with a speed limit of 40 mph. Ahead of me was a car driven by a man who appeared to be in his late 60's or early 70's. He was straddling the center line dividing the lanes and driving about 15-20 mph. As we approached an intersection the light was green. He stopped his car completely on the green, with his head turned to the right, never having looked left.	

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Mental Status (continued)	He started again abruptly and without signalling made a right turn two car widths from the right curb.	4. It was fine weather in a small tourist town and the traffic was heavy on the main street. The parking was the angle kind: into the curb, not parallel. Suddenly the elderly driver of the car in back of us saw a parking space available, and swiftly, without any signal or warning, passed us, and without a backward look turned his car right in front of us to get the parking space. Fortunately, my husband, who was driving out car, was alert and put on our brakes and steered to avoid a collision. He knows that drivers out there do sudden and strange things.
Illness and Disability	1. Several weeks ago, a salesman aged 72, with a history of heart problems, told me that in returning to his office one afternoon he remembered nearing the intersection exit close to his office driving 60 mph in the left lane of a four-lane freeway. The next thing he remembered was finding himself 12 miles away from his intended destination and going 60 mph in the opposite direction. He explained that he "came to" suddenly and could not remember how he got from the exit near his office to his present location. When I asked him if he had reported this incident to his doctor, he said "No" but he was thinking about doing so at his next check-up. 2. I was dispatched to the scene of a fatal accident involving	1. In many instances, safe drivers are not very noticeable. They blend in. Unsafe drivers stand out. A friend of mine who was driving her own car started to feel ill and stopped right next to the highway. I took over the driving and that same day I took her to the hospital for a heart condition. 2. Today a 75-year-old friend started to the city to visit a patient in the hospital. She was feeling fine when she left home, but after about 5 miles she began to feel faint. She pulled off the road, waited until the "funny" feeling disappeared, turned around and went back home. When she told me about it over the phone, she said she had felt all right

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Illness and Disability (continued)	three vehicles. The elderly driver, rather than passing in the provided northbound passing lane, swung into the oncoming lane. He then continued up the hill, entirely in the oncoming lane, for approximately 1/2 mile. This 75-year-old had been suffering fainting spells earlier in the day. He had attempted to find someone else to drive him to a doctor's appointment, but his wife wouldn't allow this. So while driving himself and his wife to the doctor, he apparently blacked out and drove into the oncoming lane for some distance. He collided head-on with two other vehicles, killing the driver of one.	since then, but she did not know what it was; and as she had never experienced it before, she was not going to take a chance on driving into the city feeling as she did. Furthermore, she was going to get to a doctor about it before she drove again.
	3. My 80-year-old friend was taking us to a dinner at a nearby restaurant. She had insisted that she would pick us up and return us home and then we would play some cards. I was much alarmed because I knew her record as a driver. In addition, she was recuperating from hip surgery and still did not have her "sea legs." She did everything wrong. It was easy to see other cars on the street taking cover. Somehow or other we did get to the restaurant. My husband drove back at my friend's request. I sat in the back seat and prayed. He was scheduled for cataract surgery the next day.	3. A trooper observe a southbound pickup with a topper. The back of the vehicle was very well lit up. It had extra brake lights and taillights. The vehicle also had clearance and identification lights. It was so well illuminated that I decided to take a closer look. As I approached, it turned into the sale barn and stopped. I approached the driver to satisfy my curiosity on the lights. The driver was an elderly handicapped man in his mid 70's. He told me he put on the extra lights to be more visible to other drivers. It was his way of warning other motorists that he was a handicapped driver.
Alcohol and Drug Use	1. A man 75 or older sometimes takes me to lunch. He enjoys two or three very dry martinis	1. I have a friend who is diabetic, so the best "safe" thing he does when he visits

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Alcohol and Drug Use (continued)	at lunch. I really panic at his carelessness on the way back home after lunch. Since the drinks are in a time frame of less than two hours, he is really driving while intoxicated. 2. The driver of the car in front of me on a city street was about 75 to 80 years old. He appeared to be having trouble making decisions. He would put on his signal but not turn. He would start to make a turn but change his mind and cut back out into the street. I stayed back to watch and was becoming frightened as this indecisive behavior continued for about six blocks. When he finally did make a turn, I followed him. He went into a driveway and parked. I stopped nearby and got out to talk with him. He seemed to be in a daze. When I asked him if he was all right, he became upset but then he said that he had taken some medicine and he was feeling drowsy and a bit tipsy. I then suggested that he not drive anymore that day and check with his doctor, which he assured me he would do. 3. While on patrol at approximately 8 pm on a clear August night, I was following a vehicle on a two-lane highway in a rural setting. The speed limit was 55 mph and there was light traffic in both directions. The driver of the vehicle was a lone elderly male. His speed fluctuated from 35 to 50 mph and when	me and drinks my booze is to let his wife drive home. 2. A group of seniors went to a restaurant to celebrate an anniversary. They ate an excellent meal and consumed a considerable amount of liquor. They had a relaxing, "fun" evening. When preparing to leave, one of them, an excellent driver who had brought several people to the dinner, prepared to leave. It was pointed out to him by one of the passengers that he had consumed several drinks and by police standards was inebriated. He showed no signs of being incapacitated but after a moment's deliberation he suggested that another member of the party who hadn't been drinking drive the car. Which he did. Coming out of the parking lot on to a busy road, he waited carefully to pull out. Luckily he did because a carload of young people came speeding down the road, appearing out of nowhere. Because a sober driver in the group was at the wheel, a possible accident was averted. Drinking does tend to produce a happy-go-lucky feeling not conducive to good driving, especially on a very busy street. 3. I noticed that some medicine I was taking for hay fever made me a little sleepy. This happened once when I was

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Alcohol and Drug Use (continued)	he met traffic, he would move to the left in his lane of traffic very near the center line and cause the opposing traffic to move right. As he crested a hill he moved to the left and was partially into the opposing lane of traffic. At this moment, another vehicle which he was meeting had to move to the right. The elderly driver overreacted and pulled to the right, causing his vehicle to go into the ditch. Conversation with this man indicated that he had an eye problem due to extreme corrective lenses and that he was trying to get home to take his medication, which he had forgotten.	driving and I kept nodding off. I asked the druggist about it, and he advised me always to ask my doctor about the effect on driving of the prescriptions I was taking. Now I do so. If I know I am going to drive, I avoid some combination of medicines, or I try to change the schedule for taking them.

ATTITUDE

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Awareness of Limits	1. John is about 75 years of age and has always been an exceptionally alert driver. Last Summer, he suffered two strokes, one of which affected his left side and made walking difficult. His reactions are also slowed down. Over the years, he has prized his car and the mobility it affords him. Driving on densely traveled streets at busy periods, John tended to override the white line dividing the lanes. This was pointed out to him, but he didn't seem able to correct the error. This combination made him upset and hostile. Some of this feeling was directed toward other drivers who, impatient, tried to pass. Some blew their horns. Obviously John shouldn't be driving. His family is afraid to stop him, feeling that the ensuing emotional upset would worsen his condition. But he can't accept the fact that he isn't a safe driver anymore, and his pride, obstinancy, and hostility eventually can result in an accident. He says even if he did have an accident and got killed, he is not too worried at his age, but he doesn't consider the fact that accidents often involve other people.	1. I have a 1986 Toyota. My 60-year-old friend was driving it on a beautiful day on a well-paved, divided country highway. We heard a car approaching from the rear, then much horn blowing as the car pulled into the left lane beside us and slowed to our speed. A young man in his early 20's was driving a souped-up older car. Evidently, the new Toyota was the cause of his gestured challenge to drag-race his old against our new, his age against ours! I could sense how much my companion wanted to accept that challenge as his body tightened. Suddenly he laughed, good naturedly declined, and motioned the other car ahead. The temptation to show the new car's power was quickly forgotten because of long years of driving experience. Car speeds can be settled by race drivers.
	2. One of our retired seniors was returning from a trip to the south with his second wife. They were both drivers. He	2. A retired teacher in her high 70's volunteers her services at school once a week. She drives to the school. The other day the weather was getting bad with ice and snow falling. She called the school and said, "I'm sorry but the driving conditions are too bad so I will not be coming today." She made a good decision.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Awareness of Limits (continued)	had been driving for hours but decided not to give up the wheel to his wife or call it a day. He dozed off and hit an abutment. His wife was killed and he was badly injured.	3. On a summer day at approximately 8:00 am, a 76-year-old woman left her home with her husband who was in his mid-80's and unable to drive. They were traveling to another state approximately 600 miles away. When she had driven 80 miles she told her husband she did not feel that she could drive that far safely and returned home.
	3. Auntie is a widow in her mid-70's who was forced to move from her home to an apartment on the other side of town. It has been two years now, and Auntie, while living alone, still wants to maintain her independence by continuing to drive for all her needs. The problem is that Auntie insists on going back across town to a shopping center near her old home, even for a visit to the supermarket. We have pointed out to her many times that the same stores are in a shopping center much nearer to her apartment on this side of town. After much probing, she has finally admitted that her reason for continuing her visits back across town is that she is familiar with that area and she would be unable to drive elsewhere as she couldn't read the road signs. So, in order to maintain her independence, she is jeopardizing her life and the lives of others.	4. The man and his wife (both senior citizens) were in the office of a local auto dealer. They were trading their large vehicle for a mid-size car--one they felt they could see out of and handle better in traffic.
		5. I was driving on a long trip and towing a trailer. To break up the monotony, I took a 10-15 minute break every two hours. This gave me the opportunity to inspect the condition of the vehicle and trailer, in addition to stretch, relax, and rest my eyes. I always felt more alert after those breaks.
	4. In spite of his many road errors, the older driver thought that he was a good driver because he had been driving for a long time.	6. On a clear evening, a driver became sleepy after a long day following only a few hours of sleep the night before. Realizing his grogginess, he got off the road, stopped the car and changed places with a younger, more alert driver.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Awareness of Limits (continued)	5. A friend who had been warned not to drive by himself, having suffered several minor strokes, took the car out on his own without telling anyone else and caused an accident on a left-hand turn. He was about 80 years old and still had a driver's license but was stubborn and would not admit to his handicap or to the fact that his responses to varying traffic situations put himself as well as other drivers into a hazardous situation.	7. An older driver was faced with a six-hour drive, alone. He had experience and good judgment, but his physical and sensory facilities had deteriorated. He compensated for his weakness by stopping each hour for coffee, exercise, and fresh air. At the end of four hours, he stopped for a 15-minute nap. The trip was completed with minimum fatigue.
	6. An older driver recently appeared at the license office and presented a letter from the public safety officials asking him to take a comprehensive examination. When the department receives reliable information that a licensee may be incapable of safely operating a motor vehicle, they will send the licensee a letter requiring him to take a test. This older driver blamed everyone except himself for having to take the test. He passed the inside tests and was then given a street test. He drove in the middle of the street, cut corners on left turns, made wide right turns, ran stop signs, and would not look before he went into intersections. He failed the driving test badly and then told me how many years and miles he had driven, and he actually thought he had driven very well on the test. A second driving test was given and he did well enough to get by, but he still had the same	8. I know a 70-year-old woman who drives everywhere for herself. She frequently takes less fortunate friends with her; takes them to the market, doctor's, and other places. Until about a month ago, she was still driving at night to social functions and taking friends with her. She has since made the decision not to drive at night, not even for herself. She told us she could not see well at night anymore. Oncoming lights seemed to blind her and she could not see the lines on the streets. She did not feel secure, so she stopped. 9. Two very good friends live within four or five blocks of my house. We all belong to the same fraternity and we frequently attend the same meetings. Their ages are 86 and 74. Both of these guys are still very active. I have traveled with both of them

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Awareness of Limits (continued)	attitude he started with. This applicant was not incapable of safely operating a motor vehicle, and his health appeared to be very good. He had to realize he has developed some bad driving habits. He was advised that things change as we get older and that he will have to work harder at driving.	and feel that they are safe drivers. But I admire them for one specific reason. They have both admitted that their eyesight is not what it used to be, especially at night. So each time we attend these fraternity meetings, which are usually at night, we car-pool. But I am always the driver. Sometimes safety lies in not driving.
	7. A gentleman, age 74, was ordered in to take a driving test because he had been involved in several accidents. During the driving test, it became evident that he was an unsafe driver. He would look straight ahead, never right or left, and did not look into the rear view mirror to check traffic behind him. He would drive very slowly, would not use the turn signal until he started to turn, and would creep through stop signs. He could not concentrate on his driving and follow directions at the same time. He felt that because he was a slow driver, he was a safe driver.	10. Recently, a close family member reached age 70. She said she realized she was having difficulty driving at night. Night driving made it hard for her to judge distances, and oncoming headlights bothered her. She now drives only during daylight hours and has cut her driving to a minimum. If she must go somewhere at night, she takes a taxi. She has realized that her driving limitations are due to age and has voluntarily restricted herself.
	8. During a clear, sunny afternoon, I examined a man about 75 years old. He was driving in a residential area where the traffic lanes are not marked. The roadway was for two-lane two-way traffic. The speed limit was 30 mph. He consistently drove on the wrong side of the roadway when making left turns. When he approached	11. My friend, who is 70 years old, needed to pick up a young man at the airport around 8:30 pm. She had decided on her own that she should no longer drive at night because she is deaf and at night was having trouble seeing as well as she needed to. So she decided to go out at 6:30 when it was still light, take a book to read, and wait. She asked the young man to drive home in

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Awareness of Limits (continued)	a stop sign at the intersection he would apply the brake but did not stop completely. His speed was approximately 5 to 10 mph through the stop sign. After the examination, the applicant honestly felt that his lane position was correct and that he stopped properly for all the stop signs. 9. I was giving a road test to a 91-year-old lady. I asked her to back as if she were backing out of her driveway. She started backing without looking to the rear. She was staring forward. A motorcycle had stopped behind her and honked to get her attention. I asked her if she had made a mistake and if so, what the mistake was. She did not want to admit that she had made a mistake and said that I had told her to back as if she were backing out of her driveway. She does not back properly there either. 10. I remember that sometime ago a lady about 68 years old had been required to take a comprehensive examination because of a request submitted by a police officer in one of the nearby towns. She had an attitude that every police officer was picking on her and that there was no way she could be a problem driver. As we discussed some of the accidents and charges that were filed against her, she either denied	the dark instead of trying to bluff it through. I thought this was a sensible solution. 12. In a community of predominantly older drivers, I have frequently noticed that many of them have their foot on their brakes as they approach a traffic signal which is still green. At first I felt that they were overcautious and not necessarily "safe" drivers, but then I began to feel that they were aware of the slower reaction time due to their age, and were using that precaution to compensate for their limitations. 13. One day I saw my father-in-law wait a little longer for traffic to clear, before he pulled out into a traffic lane from a shopping center. In my opinion, he passed up a few chances that I or a younger driver would have taken. My father-in-law is 62 and aware of his slower reaction time. 14. I have an aunt who for years drove many miles above normal to and from work. Now that she is 74 years old and living alone, she keeps herself stocked up on all necessities for living to prevent any need to be on the roads during inclement weather. She is aware that age has slowed

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Awareness of Limits (continued)	they happened or declared that there was a mistake on the officer's part. While interviewing her, I noticed that she appeared to be frail and in poor health and appeared to smoke too much. Moreover, she did not appear to be as rational and mentally alert as a good driver should be. We began a comprehensive driving test that revealed unsatisfactory performance in several areas such as observation, lane position, approach to uncontrolled intersections, etc. She never looked at a cross-street we were approaching, seldom gave a correct signal, and turned from the wrong lane. I recommended that because of her failing physical and mental alertness she give up driving and submit her license. True to form, she refused.	down her reaction time and the inclement conditions would only compound this while on the road.
	11. My neighbor is in his 80's; he is a retired school teacher and psychologist. One summer day, he asked me to take a short ride with him. He mentioned that his car was not running right. Perhaps I could detect why the engine was running rough. I agreed and got in the car with him. He drove around the block at about 10 mph, weaving from curb to curb. He was hunched over, myopically peering thru the windshield. I gradually realized that he couldn't see past his hood ornament, his eyes were so bad. Needless to say, I relieved him at the wheel and drove him	15. My friend wanted to pull onto an extremely busy highway and make a left turn. He would have had to cross both lanes of the highway to do this. Instead, he made a right turn and at an opportune time he made a left turn into a parking lot. This enabled him to make a right turn onto the busy highway without crossing the two lanes. Better to take extra time than take chances. We are slower to act than we once were.
		16. A senior citizen who had had excellent driving records all his life said, "I am a senior citizen, I'm still a good driver, but I am a senior citizen. Since I'm retired, I have more time. I also have more money. I try to make all right turns. It takes longer and uses more gas, but I can afford both of these. I feel in this way that I am protecting myself as well as other people."
		17. The license of an elderly lady about 70 years of age was soon to expire. Knowing that when people get older their condition sometimes changes more rapidly, she had her eyes

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Awareness of Limits (continued)	home. He told me he intended to drive to the east coast the next day! I diplomatically told his wife he should not drive. She replied, "God, God, I don't let him drive, but he still wants to try!" Seniors should realistically assess their physical condition, and drive only if they are fit. If not, they should take a bus. They'll live longer.	examined by her optometrist. She stated that she gets them checked annually because she is aware how important seeing is to driving. Her vision did meet our standards for driving with corrective lenses. However, she said that her reactions are not as quick as they used to be, so she limits her driving to the time of day when the traffic is light and travels only in familiar areas. If she must travel to a less well known city or town, she has someone take her. She doesn't want to be a hazard on the road or be the cause of accident or injury. She has the proper attitude toward driving and knows her limitations and how to adjust to them. 18. About two months ago, I gave a driving test to a male applicant who had by oversight let his driver's license from another state expire. I noticed as I approached the vehicle that he appeared to be about age 78-79. As the test began, I observed that he was evidently in good health and alert for his age. His driving reflected his general attitude, that he knew he was a man of advancing years and had realized that some of his abilities were not as good as they once were. Although not a "slow poke" driver, he did take that extra look at intersections, etc. The result was a steady smooth ride that

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Awareness of Limits (continued)		gave confidence that everything would be all right.
		19. This applicant, in her 70's, appeared observant of other vehicles when she was driving. She was alert at the wheel. She knew that her vision for night driving and for judging distances wasn't as good as it had been. Therefore, she saw her optometrist regularly and was extra-cautious when driving, but not to the point of obstructing traffic. She took pride in this. In further consultation, it was verified that she had recently completed a defensive driving course. If all older drivers were as cautious and observant as this lady, how much safer we would all be!
		20. The driver was 80 years old. He had been driving for many years. Lately, he drove only short distances to the grocery store or the mall. Then he started to have blackouts. They lasted only a few seconds, but he knew it wasn't safe for him to drive anymore. He gave his car to his daughter. It was a difficult decision for him to make but a wise one for everybody.
		21. While driving on our local street, I passed out for a few seconds. Fortunately, my wife, who drives and was sitting

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Awareness of Limits (continued)		besides me, was able to grab the wheel and elbow me into a conscious condition. I have decided to forego driving a car except in an emergency.
		22. One of the safest acts I have observed by an older driver was performed by a neighbor. She was 74 years old at the time, had no sight in one eye, and had fallen and broken her hip. After surgery and the recovery period, she took stock of her physical abilities and decided she would not be a safe driver. She surrendered her license and sold her car.
		23. Just try to tell your 88-year-old father to stop driving. He was not able to find his way home sometimes and his wife had to tell him which way to go. His children could not persuade him, so they went to the police department for a solution. They said as long as the father could pass the driver's test that he could drive. We finally got desperate and really had a heart-to-heart talk with him saying that he could have a bad accident and would have to go to court perhaps and this would affect his family also. So the next time his license came due, he did not renew it or try to. This may well have saved some lives.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility	1. In a car entering an on-ramp to the interstate, a car full of older people were, judging by all of the gesturing and head movements, all involved in conversation. I was directly behind them and can attest that their speed was all of 30 mph. Despite much horn-blowing from cars behind me, the lead car refused to increase his speed beyond 30 mph. To compound the problem, cars on the interstate in the slow lane would not move over or slow down. The result was a complete stoppage of all cars on the approach until considerable traffic had passed. When we could proceed, the car in front accelerated so slowly that only three cars could get on. The driver in the car behind me was so furious that he swung around me and the car ahead and then abruptly back in front of the lead car who braked and almost caused me to rear-end it. Needless to say, I was happy to get out of that situation in one piece.	1. A woman made a right hand turn into a one-way street; immediately realizing her mistake, she stopped. However, she was blocking oncoming traffic. An irate driver started to blow his horn and loudly shout insults at her, causing the woman to cry and become frustrated. She couldn't back up or go forward. An elderly man in the car behind the irate driver got out of his car, walked over to the mad driver, and said, "You can sit here all day and blow your horn which will only make the situation worse, or you can help me to get her safely turned around." To make a long story short, the older man got into the woman's car and while the other driver (not mad anymore) directed traffic, was able to turn the car facing the right direction. As the older man walked back to his car, you could hear the applause from the other drivers waiting in line.
	2. I was a passenger with an elderly man and his wife when we came upon an elderly woman standing by a car on the shoulder of the road. There was a white cloth tied on the car. The wi[illegible] asked the man to stop but he would not. He said the police would find her soon. He also would not report the situation at the toll booth because he did not want to hold up the line.	2. I observed an older driver who stopped on the interstate to assist another old couple whose car was dead. He made the necessary repairs, started their car, then followed them for over 40 miles until they were safely home. I was a passenger with the person who helped the couple.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility (continued)	3. Unsafe older driving is personified by a man I know who has always driven as he lived, i.e., headlong and everyone get out of his way! I recently saw him in the neighborhood refusing the right of way to another car at an intersection, then blocking the next intersection by pulling into the intersection rather than waiting for the traffic to move and allow him to go through. I fear this is not an element of aging but rather of the person's outlook on life. The hazard is that onset of old age has affected his depth perception, reaction time, etc., and bullying his way will no longer work--not without an accident.	3. Recently on the two westbound lanes of the interstate highway, I observed a most unusual occurrence. It was raining like the proverbial "cow on the flat rock," when I saw this little lady of about age 75 motoring along in the median lane of the interstate at about 35 mph. She had traffic stacked up behind her about ten deep. The vehicle immediately behind her was occupied by a young female about 20 years of age. She was blinking her lights and blowing her horn in an effort to cause the older lady to either speed up or move to the right, of which she did neither. Totally disgusted, the younger woman sped around the old lady and disappeared around a curve. In a matter of minutes, however, the old lady came upon the vehicle of the young woman facing backward toward the east in the median lane, a result of having hydroplaned on the excessive water on the highway. The old lady immediately began to blink her lights and blow her horn to signal her presence and warn other drivers. She then calmly pulled over to the emergency lane, parked her car and offered assistance to the young lady.
	4. On a clear morning at approximately 10 am, a woman in her early 80's drove to a friend's house to take her to visit another friend at the local hospital. She pulled into the driveway and picked up her friend. When she backed out onto the street, she hit a car parked across the street and caved in the left front door. She started to drive away when her friend told her that she had hit the car. The driver did not think so. She got out and looked at her own car, said there was no damage, and drove off.	
	5. I saw an elderly driver knock over two school crossing signs which he must have noticed	4. One Sunday morning about 2 am, a friend and I were

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility (continued)	because they landed in the middle of the road. Nonetheless, he drove around them, leaving them in the road, and continued on his way.	returning home from a poker game when we approached an intersection where there had been a serious accident. A motorist, who apparently had been drinking heavily, had struck the rear of a tractor trailer sitting at a red light. My friend and I were the first on the scene, and my friend went to an all-night store to notify the police and request an ambulance. About a minute later, an older man, maybe 60-65 in a guard or watchman uniform, drove up in his pickup and immediately started setting up flares to warn approaching motorists. Then he got his flashlight and helped direct traffic until police arrived.
	6. There were no other cars on the road when this lady pulled out in front of my car from a side street. She was about 65-70 years of age. This driver clearly had no regard for anyone else, for once in front of me, she continued to drive--at 30 mph. She owned the road and to hell with everybody else.	
	7. The elderly driver in the old pick-up truck ahead was carrying a load of branches and other debris. As he picked up speed on the open road, these began falling out of his truck and littering the highway. At the first signal we hit together, I pulled up and yelled to him what was happening. He told me the highway department would pick them up, and drove off still losing his load.	5. I was driving in heavy afternoon traffic and made a right turn into a heavily traveled street. I had hardly made the turn when my engine failed and I did not have enough speed to coast completely off the road. Luckily an elderly gentleman in a pickup truck was behind me. He immediately saw that I was in trouble, stopped behind me, and put out warning flares. Being equipped with a CB radio, he alerted the police and also called for a tow truck. Thanks to his quick appraisal, the hazard was quickly eliminated.
	8. The car was loaded with elderly people. It turned into a busy shopping complex, and the driver stopped in the only lane in one direction to let everybody get out. After about ten minutes, he closed the doors and moved ahead to park. Meanwhile, traffic had backed up to the highway and people were going every which way to avoid the jam.	

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility (continued)	9. A 75-year-old friend who lived in a retirement community had a restricted license. Because of poor eyesight, he was permitted to drive only during daylight hours, but one day on a visit to the city, he stayed until dark. He drove--and he had a serious accident on the way home.	6. One morning as I was returning on an interstate from a visit to the city, a pickup truck in front of me flipped over several times, throwing some of the passengers out of the vehicle. I slowed and moved over to the shoulder. Two cars had already stopped and two couples in their 60's had started helping the injured. One man began to direct traffic. Another man and I each had a fire extinguisher, and we put out a small fire. The older people calmed the injured until medical help arrived. One of the men told me that if these people had their seatbelts on, they might have stayed inside the vehicle. This demonstrated to me that these older people were safety minded and knew how to handle an emergency.
	10. I happened once to see a woman about 65 years of age run into a parked truck. It was a pretty day and her field of vision was unobstructed. The truck was legally parked in a mall with its four-way flashers operating. The lady was driving too fast for that area. She just drove headlong into the side and back of the truck, damaging the rear fender and door. She then backed up and drove away without so much as leaving a note.	7. A man in his late 50's driving by himself in the very early morning came upon seven boards across the highway. He pulled to the right, stopped his car, and removed all the boards on the road which could create a bad hazard for the morning traffic.
	11. I was driving a tractor trailer on an interstate. There was one car ahead of me by about 5-8 seconds. It was being driven by a man about 65 years of age. The nearest traffic behind me was at least 1/2 mile back. The highway intersection we had just passed was the junction of two interstate highways. As we approached a ramp connecting the northbound highway to the westbound one we were on, he turned left from the right lane across both westbound lanes--and found himself going the wrong way up the on-ramp. But driving his luxury car as if he were	8. While returning from a run, I received warning over my CB radio of large pieces of metal lying on the highway. When I arrived at the location, I saw an older man removing them from the highway. Although many other drivers had the option

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility (continued)	detached from both danger and responsibility, he kept going and disappeared into a complex of a curve, a hill and a one-lane bridge--all at the same place. I never found out whether the "short cut" he was so calmly taking led him shortly to salvation or to perdition, but I'll never forget him.	to do the same, none of them had enough time or concern to do so.
	12. I live in a retirement community and one of my neighbors is a very poor driver. He keeps his license from the state in which he used to live and where no examination is required, rather than attempt to get one here, where after a certain age one must be tested in person for renewal of a license. He does this deliberately because he does not want to have his driving interfered with in any way, and he has no interest in what his bad driving does to the safety of other people.	9. On a nice Sunday afternoon on a four-lane road (two each way), I saw cars in the right lane moving over to avoid a muffler lying in the road; an older driver stopped well off to the side, walked back, and removed the muffler from the road.
		10. Downtown one sunny day, I saw a man about 55 years of age. He pulled up to a street corner where a blind person with a cane waited to cross. The driver stopped at the corner, put on his four-way flasher, and lightly tooted his horn. The blind person understood, and made his way safely across the street.
		11. A senior driver stopped his car, put on emergency lights, flagged other drivers to halt, while he picked up a two-year-old crying child and carried him across the street to be with his little brother, about four years old.
		12. After stopping, a man turned on his emergency lights while letting two small boys cross the street on their bicycles. It made drivers behind him aware of the crosswalk and also warned them not to pass on his right side.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility (continued)		13. On a clear day while driving on a busy four-lane road into the city, I heard a siren of an approaching fire truck. As I moved to the curb to stop, I noticed the cars in front were proceeding as usual. I laid on my horn to get their attention. It worked; they moved over to stop at the curb. One man waved, "Thanks."
		14. On a clear but dark summer morning, two men emerged from the house, ready to begin their drive to the lake for a day of fishing. The elder man, about 69, noticed the tail and stop lights were not working on the boat trailer and began to point out the situation to the younger man. Upon hearing this, the younger man said he had always pulled his boat trailer like that and not to worry about it. At this point the older man said it would take only a few minutes to wire up the lights, and he explained the importance and safety of having the lights working properly so that those behind would know when the driver was braking or planning to stop.
		15. An elderly driver stopped his car and directed traffic on a highway where a disabled car was stalled on the crest of a hill.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility (continued)		16. Recently I tested a lady who had been a licensed driver for a good number of years. Her vision was 20/80--not good, but good enough to allow her to drive in an area she is familiar with. I contacted her to find out what type of area she would need to drive in and how much risk would be involved if she were given a restricted license. After I talked with this applicant, she decided that rather than take a chance and drive with limited vision and endanger herself and others, she would surrender her license. I feel she did this in the interest of public safety and her own self.
Courtesy	1. Recently when I went to the "grand opening" of a store, there was bedlam in the traffic lot. There were cars backed up for quite a distance when I wanted to get out of my parking space. Finally a car stopped to allow me to back out, but before I could, an elderly driver squeezed in front of the stopped car and in back of me, preventing me from backing. The stopped car didn't want anyone else to try to squeeze ahead of him so he went ahead and others followed. I was stuck again, waiting for someone to give me a chance. 2. I have noticed that some elderly drivers seem to have a tendency to feel a "gotcha" when they can block out a person who	1. I was waiting to make a left turn into a gas station and it was an older driver who stopped to let me go. 2. A courteous driver stopped at a red light on a street, let me out of a shopping center after the light turned green in his favor. 3. I found someone who was willing to allow me to exit from a parking lot into the the line of traffic when there didn't seem much hope for a break in the traffic pattern. Since the lot is next to the intersection, the traffic just keeps coming from the stop light. Finally, a kindly older

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Courtesy (continued)	is waiting to pull into the traffic flow.	driver stopped to let me enter in front of him.
	3. Traveling southbound on my recent trip, I approached an intersection with a crosswalk during the rush hour. A pedestrian made attempts to cross the street, and the car in front of me slowed down considerably. The driver gave hand signals for the other cars to slow down so that the pedestrian could cross. However, two cars in the adjacent lane, both occupied by older people, paid no attention to his hand signals and barreled on through, jeopardizing the pedestrian. The third car did slow down and stop and the pedestrian crossed safely.	4. I have admired an elderly man in his 70's who always is considerate and slows up to allow oncoming traffic to fall into freeway traffic. This is not the general rule today, to be sure.
		5. On a recent sunny afternoon, I was a pedestrian about to walk across a well travelled main street in a faintly marked crosswalk (no traffic lights). At that corner I (a female, age 70, but a vigorous hiker) usually wait for traffic to ease before stepping out. To my surprise a senior male driver stopped to allow me to cross. Other drivers near him also stopped. Younger drivers usually ignore me or simply note that I'm waiting.
	4. I am a bicycle rider. While walking my bike across a traffic-controlled street with the walk sign on and in a marked crosswalk, an elderly man stopped for the red light, then proceeded to make a right turn in front of me though I had the right of way. I stopped and yelled at him.	
	5. An older resident of my community has drawn the attention of the police and other drivers. Even though he is retired, he gets up early every morning and drives slowly on one town road or another, deliberately slowing or blocking rush hour traffic. While he has been issued citations for this, he is challenging them in court, claiming that he is within his legal rights.	6. During a bright sunny morning, a pedestrian and his pet were in a crosswalk of a one-way street. Their efforts to cross were futile because of fast-moving traffic. A motorist about 60 years of age saw this, and as he approached to within 100' of the walker and his pet, he signaled by arm to the motorist behind him that he was preparing to stop. The bright sunlight had made it difficult for those following to see his brake lights.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Courtesy (continued)	6. In climbing a long grade on a two-lane highway, an older driver moved as far left as possible as if to prevent following traffic from passing.	7. When pedestrians were crossing a four-lane street without signals, two cars, both with older drivers, stopped to allow them to cross safely.
	7. It was a clear bright Saturday morning about 9 o'clock with very little traffic on a three-lane divided road. An elderly person was going about 30 mph in lane one. A young man in a new, sporty car came up behind him and when he did not move over, the young man started to pass on his right. When the young man was almost abeam of him, he deliberately started to move to the right, forcing the young man into lane three where he hit a car that was stopped for a minor emergency. There was extensive damage, but luckily no injuries.	8. One afternoon while I was coming from the store, I was waiting for a light to change so I could cross a very busy street. An elderly driver stopped his right turn to allow me to cross, even though the walk signal did not work.
	8. One cloudy morning while driving on a two-lane highway, on our way to a friend's house, we caught up to an elderly man driving a loaded truck and going only between 25-30 mph. The opposing traffic was just heavy enough to keep us from passing. When he noticed that there were cars behind him wanting to pass, he would position his truck or speed up to prevent it. He seemed to enjoy keeping the traffic backed-up behind him.	9. A rural two-lane highway, one-lane in each direction, with wide improved shoulders. The time was early morning, the traffic moderate. The driver, approximately 60-65 years old, was driving 15-20 mph below the general speed of traffic. When other vehicles approached his vehicle from the rear, he would turn on his right-turn signal and move to the right on to the shoulder, and maintain this position until the other vehicles had passed, then give a left signal and return to the normal driving lane, at a speed that gave him good control of his vehicle. Not obstructing traffic is one of the lively virtues of the world of driving.
	9. The driver, in the center of the road, not allowing cars in back to pass, was a moving	10. Elderly couple sight-seeing, observing flora and fauna and mountain views. Other cars could not pass

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Courtesy (continued)	traffic hazard. Cars in back were honking but the elderly driver remained where he was, periodically giving the "finger" to the other drivers.	this slower moving car, so periodically the elderly driver would pull off to the right and stop, so other cars could pass.
	10. A few weeks ago, I came to a four-way stop. Two of us came up at the same time. The man driving to my left looked straight ahead and accelerated rapidly as if I might challenge him for the right of way. I would say he was in his 60's.	11. Driving on a mountain road, the slow driver pulled off until the traffic that was backed up could pass. I believe this is an act that we should all do if we are out sightseeing or just afraid to drive fast, or even at the posted speed limit. People in a hurry will take the chance of passing when they shouldn't, and this causes many accidents.
	11. One of my neighbors has little sense of courtesy, but especially when he is driving. He speeds up to get the right of way and if there is any question, he takes it. Some day he may lose it--and his life.	12. I was headed westbound, holding second position in the long line of a slow moving chain of motorists. The summer sun was hanging low in the sky and, coupled with a full day's dust, it reduced substantially what had been good visibility. I had just about resigned myself to a 25 mph pace in a 55 mph zone, when the big RV ahead signaled and pulled safely off the two-lane (two-way traffic) onto a turnout. The driver, a man well into his 70's, was still shielding the sun from his eyes with his hand but as I slowly passed and tooted "thank you" on the horn, he waved and smiled.
	12. On a clear afternoon on a two-way street (one lane each way), a car with an older driver and three passengers was moving slowly, 20 mph in a 35 mph zone, and apparently trying to find a particular store or location. Meanwhile, traffic continued to back up for three or four blocks. This was discourteous, unsafe driving.	

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Courtesy (continued)		13. Yesterday, at an uncontrolled intersection, I saw an older driver and a teenage driver arrive together but at right angles to each other. Even though the older driver was on the right, he motioned the teenager to proceed ahead. The teenager looked startled and then moved ahead as he grinned and waved an acknowledgment to the older man.
		14. On a clear afternoon in Spring, I was giving a road test to a male senior citizen. He was 73 years old and appeared to be in good physical condition and mentally alert. During the road test, I observed him perform the required driving maneuvers. At one point while he was stopped at a stop sign before making a left turn, another vehicle headed in the opposite direction pulled to a stop across the intersection but appeared to be in a hurry. The senior citizen, who arrived at the stop sign first, gave the right of way to the other vehicle.
		15. One sunny day I was driving in moderately heavy traffic on a divided four-lane highway. On my left was a woman about 60 years of age. The car in front of me signaled a left lane change. The woman was too close for him to make it. Much to my surprise and pleasure, she graciously slowed

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Courtesy (continued)		her car just enough to allow him to enter in front of her, but not enough to hold up traffic behind her. And he did not even hand-signal a thank you!
		16. I was driving east, well behind a vehicle with two older people and a child. I signaled my intention to turn right. The light had just turned red, so the gentleman driving shifted to the middle lane to allow me to make a right on red turn after stopping. I acknowledged the courtesy as we passed.
Openness to Learning	1. One of my friends had suffered a stroke, but in a short time had recovered well enough to drive again. Because I rode with him many times, I knew his driving habits. On one occasion he asked me if his driving made me nervous. So I told him of one of his faults--he stopped too close to the car ahead, and I never felt sure he was going to stop in time. He seemed to resent this criticism even though he had asked for it. I believe he really only wanted me to compliment him on his driving.	1. This older driver told me that many of the things other drivers did to frustrate him, he was also guilty of doing himself. He then reasoned that if he became a more considerate driver, he would not only be a safer driver himself but others, no longer frustrated by him, might also be safer drivers.
	2. I invited a friend to accompany me to an improvement course for older drivers. He told me he didn't need any improvement as he had driven over 50 years without an accident.	2. An applicant about 65 years of age came in to one of our stations to be retested, as a result of information supplied to the Motor Vehicle Bureau by her doctor. She was very nervous and quite concerned at being ordered in. However, she impressed everyone with her knowledge of laws and signs, easily passed those tests,

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Openness to Learning (continued)	3. A neighbor of ours disregarded advice and rules because he did not want to be told what to do. He had all the answers. While returning home one day in the late afternoon sun, he ran a red light and hit another car which was entering the cross street. He died at the hospital shortly after arrival. The accident was caused by two things. First, he was not wearing dark glasses, although driving directly into the afternoon sun, which makes it hard to see a red stop light. Second, he was not wearing a seatbelt (which is a law in this state) and was thrown from the car. The gentleman, a retired army general, was 78 years old.	and performed exceptionally well on the driving and maneuverability tests. She demonstrated that she had taken time to prepare for all phases of the exams. Her driving skills were excellent; she was mentally alert and physically capable of driving a vehicle under normal testing conditions. I believe that the applicant's actions in preparing well for the exam helped her to pass even though she was nervous and concerned about the exam.
	4. The driver came in with a chip on her shoulder. She said she knew as much about driving as any man, that she in fact had learned about driving by watching men make mistakes. She failed the written test. She said she was safe on the road. She failed the driving test. It was difficult to convince her that she needed to pass these tests in order to continue driving. Evidently she had a lot of misplaced self-confidence about her driving ability, and did not feel the need to read anything or do anything to improve.	3. A male approximately 76 years old appeared at the driver's license office where I work and presented an expired out-of-state license. He was advised he would have to pass the complete exam: written, vision, and road tests. I asked the applicant if he would like a driver's handbook for study and he advised me he had been driving for 50 years and had worn out lots of automobiles and did not believe it would be necessary to review for the examination. He took a written test and failed. He accepted a handbook for study and returned in a couple of days after reviewing it and did a very good job with written and driving tests. He told me he was glad he had failed the written test the first time and had been given the opportunity to take the handbook for study. He stated he had developed the

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Openness to Learning (continued)		attitude he knew all there was to know about driving. 4. A woman, recently widowed, had depended on her husband to do the driving. She had maintained her license, but felt that a refresher course would be beneficial. She took an older driver improvement course, reported that she had a much better understanding of the rules, and had confidence that she was a better driver, albeit a "70-plus" driver.
Regard for Laws and Regulations	1. While driving on an interstate highway, I observed a vehicle which slowed down after passing an exit ramp, pulled partially onto the shoulder of the road, and stopped. His next unsafe act occurred when he attempted to back his vehicle to the exit he had missed, causing a three-car accident. The next vehicle was unable to avoid him by changing lanes due to the heavy traffic at the time of the incident. The driver admitted that he became confused, that he knew better and should have driven to the next exit and turned around there. He said he was in a hurry, did not want to drive the extra distance, and thought he could get away with it. 2. A good friend of mine thinks that at age 56 he is the world's best driver. To prove it to everyone, he tailgates, makes	1. A woman motorist about 60 years of age wanted to turn left at a busy intersection but noticed a man about 70 in the pedestrian crosswalk. She stopped for him but he also stopped (at this point he was in the middle of the lane where she would need to drive). She refused to drive on although he three times motioned her to do so. Finally, mouthing some swear words he did continue to the opposite side of the street. The motorist knew that if she hit him in the crosswalk, she would be completely responsible. Sometimes men feel they must tell women what to do. They are not always right. 2. Male driver, age 78, observed school bus stopped with red flashing lights. He signaled and stopped. Until a few years ago in this

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Regard for Laws and Regulations (continued)	many lane changes, and drives much too fast. I try to tell him he may have fast reactions but perhaps the other driver may not have and to please slow down, but he pays no attention to me. He thinks he is above the law.	county, it was permissible to pass a school bus with lights flashing, but now there is a law against it. Immediate and constant blowing of horns from irate motorists behind him, apparently unfamiliar with the law change, did not faze him. He moved when it was safe to do so and the bus red lights were out.
	3. It was about noon, and school children were going home for lunch. Streets were slippery, especially at intersections because of snow and slush. I had stopped at the four-way stop waiting for pedestrians to pass in front of me. A car approached at my right, on a side street, turned right without stopping and drove a few car lengths before turning into his driveway without having used any turning signals either into the street or the driveway. The man driving was elderly, probably late 70's or early 80's. It was bad enough to ignore the stop sign but to be so oblivious of pedestrians (in this case, school children) as he was, seems like a bit too much.	3. A lady age 64 let her driver's license expire and had to take a complete examination. She had no problem in passing the written test because she knew traffic laws and road signs. The first thing she did after getting into the car was to fasten her seatbelt. During the test, she demonstrated her ability to handle a motor vehicle. She had confidence. Although she had an older model car, it was in excellent condition. She made proper turns, obeyed traffic lights and stop signs. In all, she was a very courteous and competent driver.
		4. The man was approximately 80 years of age when he was called in for a comprehensive examination. He had been involved in three traffic accidents within a one-year period, which he said were not his fault. He had only a third grade formal education. It was obvious from the start that he did not possess the

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Regard for Laws and Regulations (continued)		necessary reading comprehension to take the written exam, so he was given an oral examination. When the information was given to him aloud in words and terms he understood, he did a very good job answering the questions. I was totally surprised when I gave him the driving test, as I had expected bad driving, due to the accidents on record. He did not violate the traffic laws during the driving exam, but did demonstrate good driving techniques by reading the road, knowing when to slow or speed up in order to avoid conflict in traffic. He was always aware of what was going on about him and managed to always maintain the proper vehicle position to fit the situation. One of the several points of interest was how he handled heavy downtown traffic. Driving downtown when traffic was nearly bumper to bumper, and traffic lines from one light to another, he would make a decision in viewing the stale green light whether to enter the intersection, or remain at the designated mark. He would make sure he had sufficient room on the other side of the intersection before entering it, but sometimes the one following him did not exercise this driving technique, and would be partly caught in the intersection when the traffic stopped. He would notice this in his mirror and ease forward as much as possible to allow the driver behind to clear the

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Regard for Laws and Regulations (continued)		intersection and avoid traffic tie-up. What made him different from most drivers called in for the examination was his attitude toward the police, rules of the road, and the other people he shared the road and streets with. Attitude makes the big difference in any driving situation.
Caution	1. Woman, approximately 80 years old. She drove down back streets at about 45 mph without slowing up at corners or looking for cars coming from side streets. We stopped at the same grocery, and I told her I was a driving instructor and wondered why she used a side street to go 12 blocks. Her answer, "I don't need to worry about traffic on the side streets and I'm afraid to drive on the main street."	1. My experience with a certain safe elderly driver was that all safety precautions were kept, such as a good steady speed control, no weaving in and out of traffic. The driver was especially careful in making turns and crossing oncoming traffic. This shows patience in driving and results in making passengers feel comfortably at all times.
	2. One day I pulled up to a stop sign behind two other cars. We were on a residential street leading to a major street. We sat there for about five minutes. I looked ahead through the car windows to see what was holding things up. I noticed that the driver of the front car was an older woman. The traffic on the major street is usually busy. She could have gone several times, but tried to wait until the street was totally clear. After seeing that the cars were still coming rapidly, I had the feeling that she was getting impatient. Sure enough, she did what I thought she would	2. This is an experience concerning a safe driver I had the pleasure of riding with years ago. There has been no one like him since. Everyone today is in too much of a hurry. He had a temperament like a governor on a car. It was a joy to ride with him at an even speed and no lane-jumping. 3. Traffic is heavy on this six-lane street, especially during morning and evening rush hours, when you often have to wait 4 to 6 traffic lights to get through. It was

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Caution (continued)	do. She pulled out onto the major street, made a left turn and caused traffic in both directions to slam on brakes. This just about caused a major accident. I thought to myself that there are many drivers, due to their age, who have lost confidence in their judgment in making decisions while they are driving. This causes the safety of themselves and others to be at great risk.	at 8 am one day an elderly driver in an old car entered traffic on the six-lane street at the same time I did. I had a doctor's appointment and felt I might not arrive on time, so I wove in and out of traffic. The other driver, however, entered one lane and stayed there all the way downtown--about 7 miles. Occasionally I saw him as I was weaving in and out, but we were side by side when we parted company. That taught me a lesson: staying in one lane all the way is often just as fast as lane-hopping and much less difficult on the nerves. And, by the way, never did he break the speed limit.
	3. Last week a friend offered to drive me to a morning coffee. When I got in the car she told me she had no "car sense" and did not enjoy driving at all. She is in her early 70's. She took all the side streets to avoid the main streets, but that did not help much. Sometimes side streets can be dangerous too. She was overly cautious, stopping or going very slowly when there was no need to. I agree that she has no car sense and wonder if she should be driving at all.	4. Because of extreme congestion, the southbound traffic had come to a complete stop at an interstate exit. Motorists approaching this exit were unaware that traffic was at a standstill and most of them were going too fast and following too close. Traffic began to "stack up." I noticed a number of "fender benders" as well as near misses. This chain reaction would have continued had it not been for the safe driving habits of a man in his late 60's. He was not speeding, he was not tailgating. He was approaching this congested area slowly, leaving himself enough stopping distance. Cautious driving habits can alert others to tie-ups and prevent chaos.

Subcategory	Unsafe Descriptions	Safe Descriptions
Caution (continued)		5. Four-way stop. Car arrives at stop after you do, but immediately forges ahead of you. You do not take your correct turn but to avoid accident, let impatient driver go ahead of you. And you feel as good as you can about giving up your right of way.
		6. About two years ago, four of us senior citizens decided to go to the dog races. We were all between 65-75 years old. We decided that the oldest one would drive because in our opinion he was the best driver; he also had the best car. But one of the fellows did not like the idea that the oldest would be the driver. He protested but we would not back down so he decided to drive by himself and meet us at the track. The reason that he did not want him to drive was that he made us all use seatbelts and was very careful. The fellow who had objected said that he was always driving slowly and never took any chances. But he drove us anyway, and never went over 55. And we had a wonderful time.

Authors

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